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ABSTRACT

A group of researchers from Syracuse University's School of Education (New York) conducted 25 case studies of local school programs that had been nominated by teachers, administrators, and parents as being exemplary in integrating children with disabilities into the mainstream of education. The 12 case studies selected for this volume represent the diversity and range of grade levels of the programs studied. The following case studies are included: "'Walk across That Stage': A Case Study of a Program for Neurologically Impaired and Learning Disabled Students at Hutton High" (R. Bogdan); "When There's No Debate: A Program for Elementary School Students Which Has a Mission" (D. Biklen); "'I've Always Been the Kind of Teacher Who Did Things I Believed in Whether Other People Did Them or Not': An Integrated Kindergarten" (E. Barnes); "The Deaf Education Program in Sherwood Elementary School" (C. Berrigan); "If Mainstreaming Is the Answer, What Is the Question: The Puzzle of Integrating a High School Class of Autistic Students" (P. Ferguson); "Integration in a Segregated School: A Study in Contradictions" (J. Kugelmass); "The Other 10%: Integration in a Preschool Program" (S. Mlinarcik); "'They Think They Can Fly!': MacMillian Elementary School--Sixth Grade Class" (M. Sokoloff); "'I've Been Doing This Wrong All These Years': Mainstreaming 11 to 13 Year Olds in a Suburban Elementary School" (M. Cantey); "Lucky to Survive: Resource Program in an Upper Middle Class Suburb" (S. Fitzgerald); "A Feather in the Cap: A Self Contained Classroom for Severely Mentally Handicapped 16-21 Year Old Students in an Urban Middle School" (S. Lesure); "The Class and Faye: Social Interaction of a Handicapped Child in an Integrated First Grade Class" (S. Bruni). A conclusion proposes the need for interactionist theory in special education. (CL)

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In the Mainstream: Case Studies of Integrated Education for Children with Disabilities

Edited by

Robert Bogdan

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PREFACE

With the support of a grant from the National Institute of Education (grant # 353-2413-21304) a group of researchers from Syracuse University's School of Education did twenty five case studies of local school programs that had been nominated by teachers, administrators and parents as being exemplary in integrating children with disabilities into the mainstream of education. This volume contains twelve of those case studies, an introduction which discusses the project in more detail, and a conclusion which puts the findings in a theoretical framework.

The twenty five case studies are not included in one volume because they become repetitious and overwhelming. We have selected case studies that display best the diversity in what we saw and represent programs at different grade levels, with different types of disabilities and in diverse school districts. They do not necessarily represent the best written case studies, although the quality undoubtedly influenced our choice. Those that are in this volume have been edited and shortened to promote readability.

In addition to this volume, other material produced under the grant includes, the remaining thirteen case studies, articles and papers, a working draft of a book for practitioners. Data collected as part of the study is being used in five dissertations including one scheduled for a defense in early September.

Robert Bogdan
Douglas Biklen
Syracuse, New York
August 30, 1982

CHAPTER 1

Chapter I

REFLECTIONS ON A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF MAINSTREAMING:
Introduction to the Case Studies

by
Robert Bogdan

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The author is solely responsible for its content.

INTRODUCTION

Researchers in the field of special education study the effectiveness of special education interventions by focusing on particular practices, which they refer to as "treatments", and by using quasi experimental designs. Exemplar of this tradition are the so-called "efficacy studies" which pit special education placements for children with disabilities against regular class assignments in an attempt to see how they differentially contribute to the academic and social-emotional growth of students (Bennett, 1932; Blatt and Garfunkel, 1973; MacMillian, 1977; Strain and Kerr, 1981). Studies of this variety have been inconclusive. In attempting to explain the contradictory findings, practitioners and researchers who both support and oppose special education placement explain the dubious results as a product of design problems that plague field-based experiments: contamination by extraneous variables, non-random assignment of subjects, lack of control of the independent variable (Bruininks and Rynders, 1971; Guskin and Spicker, 1968; Strain and Kerr, 1981). If only these problems could be eliminated, the thinking goes, we could see the effect of such "treatments".

This wishful thinking, and the effort to refine research design of this brand may avoid the revelation that the general approach to efficacy research, an approach which reflects the field of special education's practices, is the problem. The word "treatment", for example, embodies a perspective that when examined reveals aspirations rather than delivery and pretensions rather than descriptions of what practitioners actually know and do. The generic word "treatment" and words which fall under it - "early intervention", "stimulation", "curriculum", "special education placement", "mainstreaming", "integration" - are misleading for they suggest that what practitioners do, is similar to a doctor giving an injection. In addition, this narrow focus divorces "treatment" from the political, social, economic and symbolic contexts from which they are created, applied, and administered. Further, this "treatments" approach reifies the idea that diagnostic categories such as mental retardation, emotional disturbance, learning disabled, multiply handicapped are meaningful ways to make distinctions between students, thereby obscuring basic conceptual assumptions. In short, in these and in other ways, this approach to research and practice bolsters the framework within which special education approaches the world and serves to obscure what is actually occurring in schools to children labeled "disabled" and to alternative ways of understanding their situation.

With the advent of public law 94-142, schools are mandated to provide education to children in the least restrictive environment possible. Researchers, policy makers and practitioners are now asking "does it work?" "Is mainstreaming efficacious for the disabled child?" And, "What about the typical peer?" Approaching these questions in the standard "treatment" "efficacy" mentality may obscure more than illuminate. It is easy to lose sight of the historical, political, cultural and social context within which this model of service is implemented (Sarason and Doris, 1979).

For three years, with the support from a grant from the National Institute of Education, we have been doing qualitative research (unstructured interviewing and participant observation) (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982) in twenty five mainstreaming programs nominated by parents, administrators and other service providers in a metropolitan area and its environs in the Northeastern U.S. as being exemplary in integrating disabled youngsters. Our approach was designed to avoid the trap of the efficacy studies. The concern was not with the efficacy of mainstreaming in the narrow clinical sense. We did not approach our research with the question, "does mainstreaming work?" Rather, we wanted to explore how it worked and what it was as it was practiced. Our goal was to see what actually went on in schools, how people thought about mainstreaming, what they did about it, how teachers, administrators and students experience it. While traditional efficacy/treatment studies, by design try to purify "the treatment" by controlling for extraneous factors such as history, community, culture and structure of schools and peoples' understandings of these, that was our focus. Rather than isolating discrete variables, our approach has been to start with descriptive case studies, and then by comparing and contrasting, attempting to develop a more abstract understanding of what special education, and mainstreaming are in schools.

The case studies in Part I of this volume, and the essays in Part II are part of the results of our work.

We had strong opinions about what was wrong with evaluation and treatment studies and how to proceed with our own work. For the rest of the introduction we discuss our approach and the problems we encountered implementing it.

"Right" and "Wrong" and the Efficacy Question

As we have suggested, the amount of time, money and emphasis that has gone into efficacy studies in special education testifies to the myopic view people working in that field have. Given the nature of "treatments" and the limitations of research, efficacy studies can never prove one way or another whether integration or segregation is better. In fact, thinking that research could decide this issue is naive and displays pseudo science at its worst. Further, if findings were more consistent and clearer this would not significantly alter the course of events in our administering programs to people with special needs. People are more influenced by costume, belief and morality than by the results of studies.

Another issue that is often forgotten is that if studies show that, for example, segregation is more efficacious than integration, it would be impossible to prove that this is true under all conditions. Given peoples' attitudes, skills and commitment, etc. now, integration might not prove to be efficacious but that would not mean that that would be the case in the future. It could be persuasively argued we are going through a period in which that model of service is gaining the maturity needed to work. We bring up this argument as an illustration of a way of thinking which undermines the usefulness of findings from the efficacy tradition. If social context is the crucial issue, the "treatments" potency is not so much the issue.

To illustrate what we are getting at and to bring the issue of values into full view, the Emancipation Proclamation proves useful. While there were no organized groups who referred to themselves as psychologists, and special educators four years after the close of the Civil War, we can imagine what they might have said if they were called together to discuss the demise of slavery. Undoubtedly, some would have suggested that freeing the slaves was not in the slave's best interests, and in fact "Negroes" were better off under the rule of masters than they were in their new found freedom. Freedom was not efficacious. Others might have said that it should have occurred gradually, that society was not ready for so many Black faces wandering around footloose. The more progressive might have added that there was a need for an elaborate system of rehabilitation and services prior to release and that until such was in place, masters ought to be required to keep their slaves: "There should be no dumping," they might have said. We probably would have had the position that all slaves can function in society and that the end of slavery should not be categorical.

How foolish these imagined remarks sound. We have passed the time and were well past it after the Emancipation Proclamation, of questioning whether people should be held in the bonds of slavery, even if they chose to live under those conditions. The law of the land stated what should be, and it was to be that way no matter what hardships the newly freed as well as the never enslaved might have to endure and for how long they might have to endure it. Reactionary discussions about what might have been, or how much better it had been before would have been foolish in that those engaged in such talk would not have appeared to understand the significance of the events that had just occurred. Certainly, the decision to free the slaves related to economic and other practical considerations, but the decision to free this significant mass of the population was not made because it was sure to make life easier for everyone; in fact, it was made knowing that life might be more difficult, that freedom was not efficacious. They were made at least in part because of moral and legal imperatives - there was no other way. The way we think about human beings had changed. There was no turning back.

The question that must face people who are doing research on mainstreaming and what research might be done relating to the concept has to deal with how the concept will be seen one hundred years from now. Are the issues it raises similar to those raised by slavery - that the way of thinking about disabilities has changed, that there is no turning back - or is the whole thing a hyped up fad that will pass? In approaching this research our position is the former. We believe that there is a significantly different conception of the rights of students with disabilities than held before. We believe that recent court rulings and government regulations testify to the fact that "least restrictive alternative" and mainstreaming are not merely esoteric professional cliches that will pass us by.

They are the law and they are the foundation for service delivery to the developmentally disabled in the present and the future. This fact and this understanding must guide our research agendas.

Given the strong position stated above, research which directs itself at such questions as whether segregated programs work better than integrated programs is irrelevant. Mainstreaming and least restrictive are concepts that require a whole different way of thinking about how we approach research related to schooling of disabled children. The question is not does mainstreaming work, but how can we get it to work, what are the problems in its conceptualization and implementation that are barriers to implementing programs that are morally right. We wanted to do accurate and rigorous research but we wanted it framed in a progressive mode.

Our way of thinking about these issues led to our research design but as we got into our work conceptual dilemmas arose which were difficult to deal with. The concept of mainstreaming appeared clearer before we started our work than after we were emersed in the world of the schools. Many different practices were going on under the banner of mainstreaming some of which did not fit our conception of mainstreaming. Further, there were tremendous variations in the use of the concept of handicapped in the programs we observed. When we said we supported mainstreaming and that mainstreaming was morally right, what exactly were we talking about? This undermining of our confidence was an important research experience for it made us come to grips with mainstreaming as it was conceived by others, not this vague abstraction, or ideal type invented in high places.

As we got into our research more, we began to understand that mainstreaming as a concept was more an indictment on how we think about people with disabilities than it was a concept to celebrate. If a school system never segregated children, never made a big deal about the differences between children with and without disabilities, the concept of mainstreaming would not be needed, in fact, the concept would be foreign to such a school. Such practices would be so taken for granted that to take special note of it, to call it something, would undermine its spontaneity.

A truly integrated school would be one where "mainstreaming" was not a salient concept. In our studies some programs were moving away from this self consciousness about disability but for the most part, they were extremely self conscious that they were doing something unusual, "mainstreaming". This abnormal state of heightened awareness had to be figured into our thinking and we had to come to grips with the idea that perhaps the only way to have integration is to do away with "mainstreaming".

Optimist Research

In selecting our research sites we mailed 3,186 letters asking people to nominate "successful mainstreaming programs". (Our mailing list included the membership of a number of parents and professionals, of exceptional children groups, faculty of the school of education at the major University located in the area, and the principals of all the public schools in the county of focus). Only one hundred five people nominated 91 programs located in 15 different school districts located in a large county which includes a 225,000 populated city in the Northeastern United States. Our 26 study sites were selected from those programs that received multiple nominations and reflected our interest to observe programs in different types of districts, at different grade levels, and a range of disabilities and program models.

Why use a selection procedure that is biased toward successful practices? Evaluation and efficacy research has not been a good friend to education practitioners. Researchers have brought bad news, evidence of failure, of ineffective intervention, of wasted resource rather than hope that practitioners can bring about change and develop and implement practices that make a difference in the lives of students. Our approach was to get behind the scenes but also to be positive about what is possible. We see most studies of educational change and innovation biased by design to give both a flat and a negative picture of educational programs. Most studies are very limited in scope. They choose specific variables and criteria for measuring success and if the program does not measure up the conclusion is "no effect". Much evaluation research is conducted after programs have been in operation for a short period of time, not giving the program the time to be realized. Most research uses a random sample selection procedure. Other designs use studies of pilot projects. One might expect that change and implementation are difficult to accomplish and success would be the exception not the rule yet sampling is done in such a way as to wash out the success. The standard evaluation procedures and treatment research is demoralizing to practitioners.

As we have already stated, we are ideologically committed to integration of disabled children. We wanted a design that would maximize the opportunity, celebrate and illuminate success, rather than lament the black box behind failure. In addition, we thought that it is difficult to learn what to do by studying failure. Highlighting and describing success could serve not only to boost morale but could serve as models for others as well. In fact, as a product of our research we are committed to disseminate what we learned of practical value.

An advantage to the optimistic approach, one which worked out beyond our expectations, was that approaching programs for cooperation with the study with the flattering news that they had been chosen because they were nominated for doing something well, would open doors and make the researchers welcome visitors rather than people to hide from. In an age where researchers discuss the difficulty of getting access, we were never turned down.

In summary, we favored the optimistic approach because we thought that more could be derived from it. Overall, we made smart decisions in taking the tact that we did, but we had to work through conceptual and research issues as we proceeded.

When we began visiting selected programs we saw tremendous differences in the quality of education offered to both typical and disabled children. Some programs nominated clearly did not meet team members' ideas of exemplary. We interviewed people who nominated programs to understand the meaning of a nomination. A principal, for example, did not know exactly what was going on in his program. He knew that disabled children were with typical peers and he wasn't hearing any complaints. He nominated the class wanting to reward the teacher and bring recognition to the school. Principals tended to nominate programs as in our example. Parents nominated programs in which their particular child had had a good experience. Teachers nominated other teachers who had a reputation for doing good things. Programs exist to some extent in isolation, unobserved, or at least not carefully observed. People's judgements about what is exemplary are limited by their relationship to it and limited knowledge of what actually goes on.

We began to worry that our optimistic approach might backfire. We had set up the design to be biased toward optimism, if we did not find good programs we would have real reason for pessimism. Although we found programs that were less than exemplary, many were splendid. None were without issues to discuss and problems to illuminate. This variety in quality, problems, and issues, rather than undermining the strength of our study made it more interesting having more potential to increase our understanding of what goes on in schools. Of course, one problem is we cannot say anything definitive about our sample. We do think we looked at some of the best programs available in the county. Some programs in our sample we are sure are not as good as some that did not get included. We are sure that many not included are much poorer than those we observed.

Of the twenty six programs studied we chose twelve to include in this volume. Our choice of what to include was not made on the basis of quality of the programs, these are not the most exemplary. Rather, we included case studies which we felt illuminated issues, problems and accomplishments best. The research for one case study included here was not conducted under the auspices of this project (S. Bruni). It comes from a dissertation of a person one of the authors was an advisor to. We thought it to be of such high quality and illuminated poor practices so well that we included it here.

Multi Researcher Qualitative Design

There were a total of fifteen people who were involved in the data collection and analysis on the project. These included three faculty members and twelve graduate students. All of the graduate students except one were in doctoral programs. The three faculty members had conducted qualitative studies prior to this study and most of the graduate students had taken courses and conducted qualitative research previously. Those that were inexperienced were involved in special training sessions with senior staff. All project researchers attended work sessions prior to starting their research where research procedures and issues were presented and when possible, resolved.

After the pool of potential study sites were established, the researchers were assigned settings based on their interests, and various research related concerns (people without cars got places close to the University, if a researcher had a personal relationship with the site we discouraged that being their assignment). Depending on their commitment to the project, some researchers did one site, others did more.

People were in charge of conducting case studies single handed although they were guided by the principle investigators who visited most of the sites so that they could get a first hand sense of them. We had a project advisory panel, and they visited sites also consulting with researchers on issues and research strategies.*

Each research visited each site they studied a minimum of twelve times. They followed qualitative research procedure, visiting as a participant observer attempting to have a minimal impact on the setting and observing what went on. After each observation session, sessions lasted a few hours each, the researchers went to places where they would have the privacy to write the many pages of fieldnotes required to do the case studies reported here. In addition to the participant observation fieldnotes data consisted of the transcripts of tape recorded interviews done in private with the teachers, principals and other staff that were involved in the programs. Where appropriate students were interviewed also, curriculum materials, official documents, records, memos, program descriptions were also collected as data.

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*S. Apter
R. Beyer
B. Blatt
K. Butler
B. Harootunian
S. Jacques
J. Mallan
D. Sage
A. Ozolins
S. Sarason

The researchers had autonomy to proceed with their study in a way that made sense to the particular setting they were studying. While they went in with a general approach, the specifics of how to allocate time and what was looked at was decided after they had the lay of the land. The programs observed varied considerably in structure and size and researchers use different strategies in studying different types of programs. In resource programs, for example, they might follow a student through the day, as opposed to studying a self contained classroom where the class itself became more the object of study. In an attempt to get some comparable data across sites a study guide was developed and used. This guide (Appendix I) listed the general areas that they should think about in collecting data. The guide served more to sensitize researchers to important areas than as a questionnaire or data gathering instrument.

It became evident as we discussed the study that we were going to have a data reduction problem - how would we ever make sense out of the thousands of pages of fieldnotes which would amass. Although it was not a part of the original proposal, we decided to have the researchers write a descriptive case study of each site, highlighting those things that were going on which illuminated the workings of "mainstreaming" in that particular setting. (At this date, data has been collected for twenty six sites and twenty two case study writeups). In addition to the case studies we formed a data bank with each researcher contributing their fieldnotes, interview transcripts and other data. Anyone interested in the data could read the case studies which would provide an overview of what the fieldnotes, etc. contained and then go to the more complete data if more detail was required. At least five of the graduate students working on the project were interested in doing dissertations using their own case studies combined with the materials others had collected. We agreed on a policy that everyone who contributed data to the study had access to the data bank. The case studies in this volume are refined versions of the original case studies submitted by project members.

Our open system, where researchers had some autonomy, promoted hard work and creativity but worked against having comparable data across sites. The graduate students and faculty members came from different backgrounds - some were sociologists, others, special educators, others, school psychologists, - and thus brought different emphasis to their work. The diversity is evidenced in the studies. Some concentrate on the details of class activity, a few look at the programs more realistically, their relationship to the community and history of the times. While it is difficult to make detail comparisons across sites there were obvious consistencies. While the many people working on the project made for an untidy data, it assured diversity. We were able to see special education and "mainstreaming" not only in many settings but from many different angles. In the thousands of pages of data we had concrete examples of people actually making sense out of the world inhabited by concepts like integration and disabled children. With this data we were able to think better about what people are doing and thinking in the schools.

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CHAPTER 2

"WALK ACROSS THAT STAGE": A Case Study of a Program For Neurologically Impaired and Learning Disabled Students at Hutton High

Robert Bogdan
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Introduction

"Efficacy Studies" is a research tradition which attempts to see the effectiveness of particular treatments on clients. For decades, scholars have conducted research on the efficacy of special class placement for disabled children (the physically and mentally handicapped) as opposed to regular class assignments (integrated with typical peers) (MacMillian, 1977; Blatt, B. and Garfunkel, F., 1973). These studies have been inconclusive. In attempting to explain the contradictory findings, practitioners who both support and oppose special class placement explain the dubious results as a product of design problems that plague field based experiments (i.e., contamination by extraneous variables, non random assignment of subjects) (Bruininks and Rynder, 1971; Guskin and Spicker, 1968).

With the advent of public law 94-142, public schools are mandated to provide education to children in the least restrictive environments possible. Evaluators, policy makers and practitioners are now asking "does it work?" "Is mainstreaming efficacious for the disabled child?" And "What about their typical peers?" By taking the client, in this case children, as the unit of analysis, efficacy studies lose sight of the historical, political, cultural and social context within which treatment modalities are implemented.

For the past two years we have been doing qualitative field research (unstructured interviews and participant observation) (Bogdan, R. and Biklen, S.K., 1981) in twenty five mainstreaming school programs. We got our sample by asking parents, administrators and other service providers to nominate programs they considered to be exemplary in integrating disabled youngsters. We chose sights that received multiple nominations. Our sample contained a wide range of types of programs as well as programs that served a wide range of types of disability. The concern of our research was not with the efficacy of mainstreaming in the narrow clinical sense. We did not approach our research with the question, "does mainstreaming work?" Rather, we wanted to explore how it worked. Our goal was to see what actually went on in schools, how people thought about mainstreaming, what they did about it, how teachers, administrators and students experience it. While traditional efficacy studies, by design, try to purify the treatment of controlling for extraneous factors such as history, the community the schools are located in, as well as the culture and structure of schools, that was our focus. Rather than isolating discrete variables, our approach has been to start with descriptive case studies. What follows is the first of those studies, a description of a program for "learning disabled" and "neurologically impaired" students at Hutton High School.*

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*All the names of persons and places have been changed.

Hutton High: An Overview

Hutton is one of Central City's four comprehensive high schools. It was built in the mid-fifties and recently renovated at the cost of over three million dollars. Central is a medium size American city located in the energy consuming northeast. Residents will tell you, with a hint of pride, that it is used as a marketing test area because it parallels the country as a whole in ethnic, racial and socio-economic composition. It is typical in other ways. As you go east from the downtown on Cole Street, the buildings change from large banks and stores to slums and public projects, to old declining stately one family residences, to better suburban homes, to more recently built suburban developments. Hutton is on Cole, on the edge of the city, just beyond the old one family houses and before the upper middle class suburb of Manchester. The homes around the school are well kept and substantial, but the people in the area say, "it is not as nice as it used to be." When the cities of the Northeast were more popular, it was thee place to live. Being a neighborhood school, its students were the sons and daughters of lawyers, doctors and professors. It was distinguished by its merit scholars and roster of students who had gone on to the most prestigeful colleges in the country.

In the early sixties, with the flight to the suburbs, Hutton began losing some of its professional population. In addition, with urban renewal downtown, the poor inner city Black neighborhoods began moving further up Cole Street. Madison High School, the school located downtown, use to serve the inner city population but early in the seventies all of its facilities, with the exception of the one vocational wing, were closed. Many of the poor inner city students were reassigned to Hutton. Presently, Hutton High has almost forty two percent of its 1,100 plus student body, Black, a percentage that the superintendent of schools as well as the principals know is close to the maximum allowed before a school can be subjected to court ordered desegregation, a predicament they want to avoid.

Old timers to the school and residents who had children in the school in the sixties and early seventies, tell war stories. During the flower child-Viet Nam era, Hutton had a principal that is described as being an expert on innovation and creative curriculum but an incompetent disciplinarian. The kids ran wild, the story goes, embroiled in various movements afoot, getting inspiration from the campus of a major University a few miles away. There was racial strife, a strong anti-war movement, drugs and "hippies". Hutton's reputation began to tarnish among many middle class parents as they worried about the dangers they imagined lurked behind the lockers.

Hank Polsky has been the principal for five years. He is known for running a tight ship. While some parents describe him as too authoritarian, the great majority express their appreciation of Mr. P., as he is affectionately referred to, for establishing law and order and a truce in racial strife. His dream is to turn Hutton around, to have it gain back some of the glory of the old days. But the battle is uphill and he knows it. For now, he would settle for having it remain as good as it is and to have it better serve the needs of poorer students. Approximately two hundred and fifty of the middle class children who could go to Hutton, choose not to, enrolling in private and parochial schools. One of the hopes Hank has is to draw some of these students back while satisfying the present college bound population so that they will not leave. This strategy is one way he hopes to deal with the unfavorable racial balance and equally troubling problem, declining enrollments.

Throughout the school district, the school age population is on the decline. With inflation, there has been budget cuts and reduction of services. The teachers came close to striking last year over a contract dispute mainly involving wages. Rivalry between schools in the city is high especially between Hutton and Manchester. Principals of the various schools have been set against each other in their struggle for funds. Principals don't get things easily in the district except for troublesome students and "dead wood" teachers other principals are trying to pass off. Hank is particularly concerned with having to drop subjects that have low enrollments (advanced languages, college biology, math and English) but serve the college bound students that he is interested in maintaining.

The spirit at Hutton school is far from bleak. There are exciting things happening; an accomplished drama group, a new olympic size swimming pool that has already brought hundreds of community residents to the school each week and has been an impetus for the development of the athletic program. Some students do obtain impressive scholastic records. The school is attractive and well maintained.

Increasingly, people think of it as a "safe" place to send their children. While keeping the middle class is a dominant concern of Hanks, he is concerned and under pressure to improve the performance of low achieving students. The state has recently instituted a minimum competency requirement for graduation. This test looms large in his thoughts in that continued certification, it has been threatened, depends on eighty percent of the seniors passing.

Most teachers and administrators describe the school as consisting of two types of students: the strong and the weak. As one teacher told me:

> We really don't have a bell curve, no substantial middle. You got the poor from the projects and downtown and then the University kids and those from Mulroy Hills.

Some of the strong students are sons and daughters of Black professionals as well as inner city Blacks, and there are Blacks and Whites that form friendships across racial lines but by and large friendship groups are color matched and a greater proportion of the poor students are Black. Not that there is overt hostility between the races or if you go into the lunchroom or walk down the hall, you would not see an occasional Black and White together. But there are "Black students" and "White students". While not fully socially integrated, the Black students I talked to agreed with the comment:

> "Now the Black and White stuff here ain't that bad. Machias High, that's got a lot of Blacks but it's a White school. This isn't. Here you got Black kids in different activities, on committees and stuff." (a Black student)

But on the other hand, Hutton was described to me as:

> "...a fashion show. Everyone tried to outdo the other. You talk to kids around here and that's what they'll say. The kids in my neighborhood talk about it in that way... It's not only how they dress that makes it a fashion show, it's the way people are showing off." (a Black student)

Partly because of the past, the era of academic excellence, and because high schools are defined that way, still an important thing to show off is academic achievement. While for some that means high grades in regents classes and getting into Harvard, for others it means accumulating enough Carnegie units and passing the Minimum Competency Test so they can, as they put it, "walk across that stage". Hutton High, by expecting and requiring certain minimum academic achievement in order to advance, places some of its students, no matter how hard they try, in a dubious position of being inferior, at the bottom of the heap. Some drop out, but as I was told less and less of this occurs. Lack of jobs, free lunches, medical care, keeps more and more kids hanging on, if not in high school. While they are present in increasing numbers, students who do not achieve academically, who fall behind the minimum standards, are marginal to the school, its failures.

The community Hutton is located in, Hutton's history, its problems, its strengths, its students, and what it values have to be understood in order to grasp the meaning of special education and mainstreaming in this institution. What is being done at this school for neurologically impaired and L.D. students is considered exemplary by some but if it works it is because it has modest goals that fit the culture of the school. It's goal is to help students who are marginal to the school, survive, to hold on, and to make it through, to "walk across that stage".

Administration

There has been a lot of inbreeding in Central City's School Administration. Hank like most administrators have come up through the ranks and realize, given their commitments to family and community and declining job opportunities in other districts, that they will remain employed by the district for the rest of their work lives. Even though many of the administrators are young, in their late thirties and forties, they are old timers in the sense that they have been around, and have strong opinions about how the system works.

Hank like other administrators in the district think in terms of there being two distinct categories of administrators; those in the Central office or "downtown" and those in the school, or as they put it "on the front lines". The latter includes principals. While principals' futures are intimately tied to the district, the central office administrators feel that the success of the district is intimately tied to having things happen in the schools. There is a lot of conflict and charges levied between the downtown and the principals about who's responsible when things don't happen, but it's within the family. There is a good deal of acting though and drawing the line but there is a spirit of reluctant cooperation on both sides. Hank like other principals identify with "their" schools and only with each other in confirmation of the difference between the central administration and themselves.

Principals in the Central City School District have a degree of autonomy. Special Education programs are not "forced down their throats", "you are given a choice, or at least you are consulted". The principal's dispositions toward programs for "disabled students" are important in having them placed in the schools and can affect their nature once they are there. Hank is positively disposed.

Hank, responding to the question, "Why have you taken special education classes into your school", reveals his motivation:

> "I'll be honest. Everyone has the right to an education but lets face the other reasons. This high school has an unfavorable racial balance and declining enrollment. To put it bluntly, I need bodies. If the students are desirable, the other principals will fight over giving them up. Special education provided me with a chance because principals don't fight for the handicapped, at least not yet."

It's clear that Hank sees special education programs as a tool to solve problems. He sees taking the lead among the high schools in developing special education programs as a way of bringing recognition to the school. Others, in the same circumstances, see such programs not as a help and a credit but as a burden. Who knows why Hank sees it the way he does; perhaps his religious background, or the fact that he has a relative active in special education, or his optimism, or his pro-active approach to problems.

Hank wanted the program for neurologically impaired and learning disabled kids but all the marks are not plusses for Hank with special education. He has immediate problems to respond to.

> "We're under pressure to start this new qualifying school for kids who aren't keeping up to grade level (not special education). Then they keep hitting us with budget cuts."

While I was observing at Hutton High, Hank was asked to take a self-contained class for autistic kids, the first such program in the city. His reaction to that request is instructive in the ordeal of balancing his positive disposition to special education and the other pressures he is under.

> "I just can't handle it with all the pressure I'm under now. We have three EMH programs and then Laura's severely emotionally disturbed class and then the LD and the resource room. I want to start good programs, programs that can work.. that can bring the kids together with other kids. The district asks me to take kids and they give you a special ed teacher and nothing else. Hell, if you keep taking classes, that's an additional load on the regular teachers. The special ed teacher can't teach the high school curriculum. These handicapped kids, if they're in regular classes, have to be with regular teachers but they don't get any support. The central office doesn't realize that it takes a hell of a lot more resources than just the special ed teacher to run a special ed program in a high school."

Hank's approach to the central office is suspicious. At times, he thinks the people downtown are playing the numbers game. "They are more concerned with how it looks on paper than with what is going on." Every new class he takes, he tells me, there are promises made about teacher's aides and additional resources but once the program gets in, they start withdrawing such help.

Hank is sincere in wanting the special ed program to be exemplary and to be a positive force in the school, but while he is willing to add classes, he has not developed a cohesive program. At Hutton, each special education class is an entity unto itself. There is no central planning for all the activities. In addition, these classes are not integrated into the larger school, that is, while they are physically present (integrated) and their students may be with typical students, their presence has not been articulated so as to make them an integral part of this school, a school which honors academic achievement. The kids may be in the school but how special education fits into Hutton's philosophy, what it values and strives for, its way of doing things, has yet to be conceptualized. The central office, from Hank's perspective, has not been very helpful. He is not sure who is in charge of making special education work in his school. He feels that what goes on in his school is his responsibility but when special ed programs were more centralized, the director of special ed was in charge and Hank deferred to his presumed expertise.

Hank knows very little about the nuts and bolts of special education. The director of special education in the central office is seen as having the technical knowledge concerning types of disabilities and what children who have specific disabilities need. By pointing out Hank's lack of knowledge is not to criticize him. When he did his degree work, special education was not a part of the curriculum. He does take part in various educational opportunities, but none have provided him with a way of thinking about special education so as to do effective planning. This puts him in a bind he feels. He is pro-integration, if it is done the right way, that the program is good, but he is not sure what is "good". He also feels distrust toward the central office. He feels he is responsible for his school and for the special ed program within it but he gets advice from the central office which he does not trust completely. He feels that the central administration's interests may not always coincide with his and his school. He is not in a good position to effectively negotiate with them. For example, demand certain resources in exchange for taking on additional special education classes.

Marge's Program

While officially known as a resource program for neurologically impaired and learning disabled students, most people including Hank refer to the program that is our focus as "Marge's program". Marge's program evolved out of existing programs. As Hank explained:

> "We looked around and could see that some of the kids that were in the school already, were learning disabled. Some couldn't read and they didn't have a program. Marge was certified and interested, so we figured we might as well set it up."

Mr. P. originally brought Marge (Mrs. Katz) to the school to be a teacher in a resource room. He recruited her or "stole her" as such a transfer is often referred to by principals, from a jr. high in the district. He heard she was good and he is happy because he didn't get fooled. She works hard and is effective. While Marge will complain and demand and give Hank "a hard time", he respects her and he is glad he has got her. She is satisfied with Hank. One thing that Hank is particularly happy about with Marge is the way she has become an integral part of the school, as he put it:

> "I believe that the special ed teachers ought to really be a part of the school, not islands. The teachers have to be integrated otherwise the other teachers aren't interested. I don't go around twisting any teachers' arms about taking handicapped kids. The special education teachers do. They have gained the respect of all of the teachers and that makes whatever is happening here, happen."

Mr. P. supports the concept of mainstreaming and he supports Marge but he has conflicting demands, and limited expertise. He will fight to help the program when asked but for the most part, it is Marge's program.

The Teacher and The Aide

Unlike many special education teachers, Marge not only participates in the school as a teacher of "special students", she coaches the tennis team, is active in other ways in school affairs and she can be counted on to appear at regular school events. She is in and out of the teachers' lounge, in the halls, up visiting other teachers. She does much of her business with regular teachers through casual encounters that regularly occur. Marge's presence is known in the school. She knows many people and uses the school's resources to enhance her program.

She is an energetic, attractive, well dressed, black reddish haired, thirty seven year old woman who has two children of her own and a husband who is a businessman. She went to a small state teachers college in New York and was permanently certified as an elementary school teacher upon completing her degree in the early sixties. She worked in a suburban school district for a number of years but didn't like it and quit. Jobs became hard to get and she did not have one. Then one day, as she tells the story, she was called by the Director of Special Education in Central City (who has since left) and asked if she wanted to work as a resource teacher in a junior high. This was eight years ago. As Marge puts it, "I didn't even know what a resource teacher was. The way it was described wasn't exactly the way it was either."

Marge got her training on the job. Mona, the teacher who taught the resource program next to hers at the junior high, was "great". "She was so positive. She taught me everything I know." Mona is now at Hutton, too, across and down the hall and still a supportive colleague.

The state department of education began making moves to certify special ed teachers. Marge had been a resource room teacher for three years and therefore fell under a grandfather clause which made her eligible to receive permanent certification as a teacher of the learning disabled and emotionally disturbed. As she points out, "this was without ever having taken a special education course." She does not identify with the field of special education, and this may be to her advantage in making her program at Hutton High a success.

To this day, she has not taken any formal training in special education. She has taken district workshops, the most helpful to her being a structured learning training program. In regard to training experiences in special education, she has this to say:

> "Lots of times when they talk about learning disabilities and emotional disturbance, they discuss how the people become learning disabled and emotionally disturbed, the various theories, the origins of the conditions. What I really need is help with dealing with what the kids are now and what I can do to help. How I can help them live on their own."

The year prior to this, Marge was a resource teacher at Hutton High. This is the first year of her program for neurologically impaired, learning disabled students, although a number of the students mentioned that they did not think that it was very much different from what they did last year, and two teachers indicated that they did not know that she was involved with a new program. As she explains it:

> "Before this year, I was doing a resource program. There were kids in that program and E.M.H. and E.D. programs that weren't really being served properly. They were more learning disabled and neurologically impaired than what those programs served. The resource program was moving much more to a model for serving the emotionally disturbed. There was a need for this kind of program so I volunteered."

She is pleased with what she has accomplished.

> "The teachers here are really terrific. I had my doubts but everything is working out. There are other special education programs in the school; three E.M.H. classes, a severely emotionally disturbed and the resource. So the teachers here know that there are different kinds of kids and they are in the regular class. All but the severely emotionally disturbed are mainstreamed. It makes it easier when the teachers are great. In some ways I am lucky because I was here before as a resource teacher. I have some of the kids now that I had last year. These kids needed more academic stuff and less social and therapy. This type of program is more appealing to me."

Marge's previous experiences with resource programs left her frustrated and ready for a change. Thinking back on the students she had in junior high school, she says that many of them are now in jail. A young man who was currently on trial for murder in Central City is one of her ex-students. As she puts it, "having those kinds of students 'really gets you down.'"

She describes her present students as having more physiological and learning problems and not being "as emotionally disturbed" as those she had last year. Two of the students, Jason and Leroy she points out, have behavior problems in addition to their neurological problems. While some of the students have been in trouble in school and with the police, for the most part, she thinks of them as "nice kids". Even those of her students that are behavior and attendance problems, she gets along with well. They are responsive to her requests. She cares about her students and they care about her. This personal bond she has with the students is central to what the program contributes to the students' well being.

I asked Marge what was satisfying about her job. She said:

> "Take people like Mark. Now, if you look at his record, he sounds awful. He has made a lot of progress. And, last year, three graduated. I don't know, some of these kids are my kids. I really love them. I try to do something for them."

While Marge describes her students as "neurologically impaired" and "learning disabled", she has no training which would indicate that she has an understanding of what these phrases mean professionally. For her they mean that the school psychologist in consultation with the school psychiatrist has officially designated them as having these conditions. She sees their problems in simpler terms "they have trouble learning" and sees such classifications as administratively useful but not very meaningful.

Reading through the records it is apparent that such designations are made in light of what programs are available. That is, before Marge's class existed, there were no programs for children designated neurologically impaired and learning disabled at the high school level and most of the children who are now in the program were not labeled as such. It is only recently that they have been reclassified. Her students have been in classes for educable mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed and resource programs prior to this year. Marge, in part, attributes their educational background as a source of their problems in that she sees that they have not been prepared to learn orally (instead of by the printed page), something that she emphasizes in her approach. In commenting on her own preparation for heading up the program, she points out that most of the students are functioning at an elementary school level so her training in reading and math are appropriate.

Alfred, or Mr. Armstrong as the students call him, is the full time teachers aide attached to the program. The principal, Marge and everyone who is attached to the program sing his praises. He is reliable, interested and active in the program. Born in Alabama, he moved to Syracuse when he was very young. He went through the public school system, graduating from Hutton's football rival, Manchester High. His first job with the school system was a hall monitor in a junior high. When a teaching assistant working in the same school in a resource program left, he applied and got the job. Later he asked for a transfer and wound up with Marge. He is pleased with their relationship. Alfred likes his work but the pay is difficult for him to live on. He goes to college two nights a week and he doesn't have money to have much of a social life. He is working toward a degree in social work, is twenty seven years old, about five feet, eleven inches and he is Black.

The Room

Marge's room is on the first floor half way down the corridor at a busy intersection. Across the hall is another special education class, a resource class, but the other special education programs are spread out through the school. The room Marge occupies is small, perhaps half the size of a regular room. Her homeroom class, which is comprised of typical students has about twenty five in it and they pack the room. During homeroom there are not enough seats to accommodate all. One wall is windows facing an open space which makes the room light. The class is set up with Marge's desk in front, and a circle of seats all around the sides. Most of the chairs are made of plastic and have large formica top writing surfaces attached. Others have no writing surface attached and are behind desks. The furniture is not uniform in its vintage or style. The impression is that it was furnished with what could be scrounged from the storage room. In general, the room is not very attractive. In the front of the room on the lefthand side, looking toward the blackboard is an old t.v. high off the ground on a stand. It was never used when I was there or referred to as working and being used. It serves as a place to store a box. There is a small American flag sticking out of the wall next to the blackboard. Marge's desk is cluttered with books and papers, some are in piles. There are two filing cabinets in front with a very small cheap globe on one. There is a bulletin board next to the door with a sign on it giving emergency evacuation instructions. On the cork is written, graffiti style, "Rams No. 1".

The Students

There are thirteen students in Marge's program. Besides having been enrolled in the program and having a history of school failure, there is great diversity among the students who spend the fourth period in room 108. Almost all were left back in early grades. By the time they were in junior high, they were all reading at levels far below their grade level, many at the standard of the second and third grade. All had spent time in various special education classes. Most have had "their problem" or diagnosis changed several times. Lou, for example, who is not seventeen and about six foot two inches, was diagnosed early in elementary school as having delayed speech, attributed to emotional disturbance. After having a series of tests, his IQ is listed as being fifty four and being mentally retarded. An IQ (full scale Wechsler) given two years ago resulted in a score of eighty three and he is now, labeled "learning disabled". While all the students in the program have officially been diagnosed either learning disabled or neurologically impaired by the school districts psychiatrist, in reading through the records, one gets the feeling that such a designation is as fragile as all the rest that have been applied to these youngsters during their careers. One gets the impression that for the most part, the professionals do not know what the problems of these children are and at another historical period, in another place, they might not have diagnosed what they are now.

Controversy fills the professional literature around the concept of learning disabled. It seems fruitless to argue that these students are or are not what it says they are in the records. People involved in and related to Marge's program accept the label and use it but there are certain ironies about the way some of the students are referred to. Lou, for example, is referred to as "really learning disabled" as if the rest of the students are somewhat less than fully. Some of the students are described as not really belonging in the class but placed there because of parental pressure. One boy, it is felt, isn't really handicapped but his father, who is influential in the community wants him to get the special attention the program offers. Another boy is described as "really" EMH (Educable Mentally Handicapped) but his parents did not want him in an EMH program because he was better than that. As people involved in the program, other students have stories that suggest that their reason for being in this class is not fully explained by an objective psychological diagnosis. Jason, for example, a quick talking, inner city black youngster is known for his use of drugs and getting into trouble. He was a student of Marges when they were both in junior high. Marge took him in the program because she wanted to do something for him. Now do not get me wrong, with perhaps one exception, the students who I observed in the program had serious academic problems. That is not disputed. It's that they are "neurologically impaired" or "learning disabled" of the meaning and use of those terms that I raise. While three of the students might be referred to as odd looking, only the students with C.P. are so different to stand out in a crowd. For the most part, they go unnoticed in the hall.

The family backgrounds and experiences of the students vary widely. Some live around Hutton and come from professional families. Others come from inner city and are poor, others are working class. Over half of the students are transfer students from other quadrants in the city. They come especially for the program. These students are less likely to have friends outside of the program, and appear least socially integrated.

Marge's class is racially mixed. Of the twelve who participated in the program while I observed, six were White and six Black. All the Black students were male and in total there were only three females. While close friendships in the class are between students of the same sex and race (Maxine and Pam, Philip and Mark, Jason and Leroy) there were friendly conversations, joking and indications of concern across racial groups. Philip helps Sara out of the room with her wheelchair. Mark, Pam, Maxine and Philip often joke, playing around with such games as take the comb. Jason and Leroy are not hostile toward the other kids in the class but they remain detached. They identify with each other and their friendship seems to be predicated on the fact that they are street wise, and have been in trouble with the police and do not take school too seriously. Lou and Bob appear to be the only social isolates. The students and the staff told me that they thought that the class was more socially and racially integrated than the rest of the school. Some of the students in the program are closely intertwined with friends outside the program; others rely almost solely on class members for friendships.

I interviewed all the students who attended the program while I observed. Some were extremely articulate in their views of Hutton and their place in it. Their relation to the program and how it is working for them has to be understood in the context of programs they have been in before and the particulars of their situation. To illustrate, let me share what some of them told me.

Sara lives near Hutton. She is white and has cerebral palsy. She is the only student who is physically demonstrably different in the program. She is confined to a wheelchair, is usually well dressed, although nothing high fashion. She is pleasant. I asked her about the program.

> I like this program. I'm happy to be in this high school. I'm proud to be with my own neighbors. I'm eighteen and last year I was in a junior high. Kids in the neighborhood would ask why I was going there and I told them they didn't have a program here. I felt real separate, real different. In junior high I only had one or two friends. I was only out of the resource class one or two classes, English and Math. Here it is just like normal. All my classes are with everyone else. I'm treated like everybody else. I'm not different. They accept me for what I am, I guess.
>
> I was petrified before I came here. I worried about if anyone would talk to me. I worried about my teachers. I worried about whether I could get along. Worried if I would be able to get around the building. At first, I was very insecure and use to run to Mrs. Katz all the time. Now I am more confident and only use her a little. I didn't know what I thought about what the other kids would do. I thought they'd ignore me or make fun. The L.D. thing, they can't see that except if they ask me to read. I worried the kids would find out. I worried that somebody would give me a note to read. What would I tell them. Should I tell them that I couldn't read. Then they would know. I can talk fine. I am not nervous but if they gave me something to read, I'd be real nervous and then people would know.

> Then there is my wheelchair. I didn't know how they (the kids in the school) would take that. What surprised me most about the school was the people. They were so nice. You always have a few troubles. Once or twice a kid will be nasty. One kid told me that if I ran him over, he'd beat my White ass but that is not usual. I feel that I am finally in my school. There are always some brats. One girl doesn't like me. She told me that I shouldn't be here; that I ought to be in my own room. But I am used to threats. They're just ignorant. They can't help it.

The day I interviewed Pam, she had on a preppy v-neck sweater with a madras blouse underneath. Her hair is dark brown with chestnut running through. She is a pretty girl, sporty, someone you might expect to see shopping in a suburban fashion store. She is pleasant but her smile is sometimes reluctant, as if she is not sure when she laughs if she is following. Pam, is friendly with the other students in the program but she identifies with her friends who live where she does, in the area around Hutton High. She participates in the regular school activities and is on one of the girls varsity teams.

I asked her if she would mind if I talked to her. It was during the first period and she was there with Leroy and Alfred. She had come for special help. Pam is self-conscious about being identified with "special education". The first half of the year she flunked social studies rather than ask the teacher for special help or draw attention to herself by having Mrs. Katz intercede.

What do you think of this program you are in, I asked.

> It's good cause you need help and stuff and you get it here. Sometimes I don't feel good about being here. When I come here they ask why are you going in there? Are you dumb or something? These are just the kids around. These are my so called friends but not my real friends. My real friends don't say anything. But I never talk to my friends about this program. I don't know, I wouldn't want to tell them about the trips or anything because they'd think they were dumb. I am afraid my friends would say something that would make me feel bad.

Although the program is an embarrassment to her, Pam feels strongly that it is important for her to be in it.

High school is tolerable for Pam. If it was not for her academic problems, she would be more central to the school. I asked her when she got up in the morning whether she thought that she didn't want to come to school. She told me:

> I may not want to come but it is worse sitting at home watching television. I always want to come because that's too boring.

Pam like all the students with the exception of Leroy hopes to get a diploma. She would like to go to college but, "I worry that I might not be able to get in."

Leroy was there the morning I interviewed Pam. He was on the other side of the room sleeping. Leroy's life is in stark contrast to Pams. He lives downtown in a run down area. Born in Alabama he came North with his mother, father and twelve sisters and brothers before he started school. He is the youngest. Only two of the twelve have finished high school. His father no longer lives at home but he still lives in town and sees Leroy occasionally. He is on parole for a robbery he was involved in two years ago. While I was observing, he again got in trouble with the police. Leroy has a CETA job doing maintenance. He spends a half day at Hutton and then goes down to Madison where he is in a modified mechanics program and then goes to his job. His job provides money and while I was observing, he exhibited his resources in new clothes that he bought. Leroy talks slow. He looks larger than his five feet, ten inches height because of his solid build. The day I interviewed him, he had on a black shiny shirt and black pegged pants. He wears his hair short, and although not defiant, he is often a reluctant participant in class activities.

> Leroy, what do you think of the program you are in?
>
> It teaches you some basic stuff. If I wanted to learn science or algebra, I'd have to stay a long time in this school because I'm pretty slow. You need stuff like that to graduate but I'm not gonna graduate. That's what they told me, Mrs. Katz and the vice principal. It is too late for me now. I'm gonna try to learn those basic things that might help me. I'm seventeen now. They say I missed too much time. I don't like not graduating but they say that if I settle down, I could learn some basics and train for a job.
>
> I've been in this program for two years and in special education all through elementary school. Being in this class gives you some problems with other people. If they know that you are in here, they don't react to you the same way. It is like they think that you are not like them. They would think that you are not smart. Like they are going to college and you're not. You are different. I would want to go to college, I would want it that way but that ain't the way it is. I tell some close friends that I am in this class but I wouldn't tell the others. It gives you problems. Special education means you can't keep up.
>
> This is not a school I would want to stay at except for the program. If it wasn't for the program, I would have dropped out. I feel comfortable but on certain days I don't feel like being around anyone. I feel frustrated. I hope those days go faster. I keep getting the work wrong and I'll ask Mrs. Katz. If I still can't get it, I get frustrated.
>
> I asked Leroy what he wanted to be after school and he told me:
>
> I want to be what I can get. All I can get is work with my hands. That's the farthest I can get in life. I don't like it but that's what I'm told so that's what I have to think about.

Jason was the only student in room 108 during the third period so I went up to him and we began talking. Before that I had noticed this large, perhaps six times life size ceramic hand on the shelf in back of Marge's desk. It was a dark indigo blue and it was striking because of its color as well as how well done it was. The glaze gave it a special shine. The two middle fingers on the sculpture were bent down into the palm and the thumb was bent over the two. I asked across who had done it and he told me that Jason had, in the three "d" class. Jason's eyes were red. They are very often red and watery. He yawns a lot. He is about five feet, eight inches, thin and wears a cap. Even though he often looks like he has just gotten up or should go to bed, he still has a way about him that indicates he is full of life. He carries himself in a way that tells people that he is cool and that he is ready to tell you about it with a quick remark or a glance.

I went up to Jason and said, "What about that hand. It is nice. What do the fingers down mean?" "Wine, you know that kind of cheap wine they sell. That's the sign for it." He had on a white shirt, with a ring around the collar, a brown sweatshirt and dress pants. On the desk in front of him, there was a short bristled brush, like a clothes brush, which he occasionally would brush down his short hair. He kept taking off his gold cap in a nervous way. "Do you mind if I talk with you? I want to interview you."

> No, just sit down. First of all, let me tell you that I'm in this class but I'm not like most of them. I am slow in some things but I'm not as slow as them. In some things I'm slower than your average but in some things I'm a lot faster. I don't like being around them too much because they give me a bad reputation. These kids, they're okay, I mean they are all right to talk to and things like that but they are slow. Now don't get me wrong. This program helps me a lot because of Mrs. Katz. She helps me with my book reports and when I get homework, I can come and she can help me. In that way, it's really good but I'm not as slow as them.

Jason often makes sounds of disgust during the fourth period, to show that the work they are going through is too easy for him but he has difficulty doing any written work.

I asked Jason what he planned to do after school.

> I'm gonna get me a job in a factory. I'm gonna do that and work there for about five years and make enough money and then open myself a store, a corner store, you know, selling groceries and that kind of stuff, a little beer. Can start it off small but then I will grow and then maybe I'll have me four or five different stores and big stores. You don't need a diploma to do that, to run a store or anything, but I'm gonna get me a diploma. If I could pass in college, I'd go there too. I'd love to go to college. I'd go for business.
>
> I don't have any friends in this class, I mean I talk to them but I wouldn't call them friends. I don't have any real friends in this school. You see, I'm supposed to go to Miram High. I live down on the south side. I got kicked out of there. They just wanted to get rid of me.
>
> I like it here because I don't have any friends. If I had them, I'd be getting into trouble all the time. I like Mrs. Katz. I've known her for a long time. She kept me out of trouble. If I'm in the right, she will really stick up for me.

I asked him about the minimum competency test. He told me:

> Well, I hope I pass. Now my sister, she got out without taking those. That really ain't fair. Now a days, they have tests that are a lot harder than they used to have. You can't get a good job without a diploma. Well for that matter, you can't get a job with one.

I asked him about his family and he told me he had a younger brother and older married sister, a mother who he wanted to do good for and a father who "hasn't been around in a long time." Jason told me that a lot of the Black kids here are what he calls east side punks. He comes from the tough side of town, the south side.

> You see, most of the kids that I hung out with in jr. high school, they're in jail or they have been kicked out of school. My three friends that I was with, they are out.

I asked Jason why he was in the class and he said that it was for his behavior problems. I asked him "did you ever hear the word learning disability?" He said,

> Ya, that's what they labeled me. But I'm much more advanced than that. I'm not like most of the kids in this class. You see, but it will help me graduate. The only problem is that they label you that and that is the way you are going to be known for the rest of your life. When they look you up in the school records, there it is. You are that way for life. It wouldn't help you get a job, people seeing that. They don't want people with learning disabilities. All I want to do is graduate, though, that's what I need. Now, if after being labeled and I don't graduate, then you really got it bad.
>
> I thought about going out for football next year. I'll be eighteen tomorrow though. I probably won't be able to go out.

He said this in a tone of voice that indicated that he had just discovered that he was eighteen. He flashed in and out of deep thought, and came back with,

> This is a good program. I would say that I stand a fifty to seventy-five percent chance of graduating than if I was in the regular class.

He said that with less of the self-confidence and bravado than he spoke with before. I got the feeling that he didn't know what "percentage" meant.

Mac is a sixteen year old Black student with a friendly disposition. He carries himself with a maturity that is greater than his age. He is short and broad shouldered. This is his first year in high school.

I asked Mac about the program, whether he liked it. He said,

> It should be more open to talk about you and your problems and what you want to do. If you are in a special class, you can't be this and you can't be that. That is what the teachers tell you. They don't give you a chance. I'd like to be a musician but they say I can't be reading too well. Mrs. Katz is trying to fix me up so I can get some music lessons. I play the base, practice at home with a group. I'd like to get in the school band but nothing has been happening so far. Maybe next year. I'd like to read music but they don't know. There are lots of people playing jazz and they don't know how to read jazz. I'd like to finish here and like to go to Eastman up in Rochester. That is a good school. For me, with my special problems, it would be hard to get in.

I asked him, what are your special problems?

> I can't see any in myself. I see myself as really no different from anybody else but when I take those tests, I don't do too good. The people who give them to me see some stuff about me. I can't get along in a regular class. I'm a slower learner.

I asked about where he lived. He said he lived on North Maple with his parents. His father works in a factory and makes a fairly good living. He has got eight kids living at home and there were fourteen total in the family.

I asked him about the class. He said,

> Well, everybody in the class is kind of different. I really like the class actually. The kids are nice. I'd rather be in here and have somebody to help me. If they could fix me up with some classes in music, that would be better.

I asked him about liking school. He said,

> I know everyone here. That is why I wanted to come. I like it. When I went to Washington, they wanted to know where I was because they were all coming up here and I was going there. Now they ask me why I am not in their classes. I tell them that I am in math and everything, just like everybody else. They think I am just like them; that I don't have any learning problems. They don't know about this being a special program or anything. I mean it is not going to look right if I don't graduate with them. I'll probably be a year behind or so but it won't really bother me. I mean that is the way it is.

I asked him if some of his friends came in and saw him in this class and knew that it was a special class, how would he feel. He said,

> Well, it is not that I am ashamed but they would be just kidding around and bugging me. I wouldn't like them to find out because they'd be on my back but it wouldn't be all that bad.

I asked him if he was asked to read in class, how would he feel, He said,

> If you are around the broads you are used to talking to, it can be a problem. Cause there are things you can't read and you feel foolish. But I read pretty good. I read all that I can. The teacher helps me. A lot of the kids in the class can't read that good anyway.

I asked about friends in the class. He said that Jonathan was a friend and that Mr. Armstrong lived in his neighborhood. He said, "I get along with people pretty well. That is one thing."

I asked him what he thought about the competency test and he said, well, he thought it was good. That was one good thing about being in this class that you reviewed for the competency test. But he said,

> I don't think they should have them. It is dumb. A person can only remember a certain amount. Here you do things eight months ago and then you are expected to know it right then. If you were tested once on it, why don't they just listen to the teacher who tested you. They expect you to learn all that.

It was very, very striking that Mac had no idea of what the purpose of the competency test was. That here these programs that are invented in Albany they are received by the high school students. The high school students have absolutely no comprehension of their purpose.

I asked him if he ever thought about the Army. He said,

> The Army could be good but he would rather be a musician.

I asked him about the trip he had taken to a factory the day before and he said it was alright but he wouldn't want to work there. It was boring. He said,

> I want to be known as somebody, not somebody who is on the assembly line. I want to make my own album. I want people to know me. I want to be on talk shows and be somebody.

As their comments suggest, being in Marge's program means different things to each student. For most, it is a sign of their failure. On the other hand, it is a chance for success; getting a diploma. For some, the friends at the school makes school worthwhile. For others, not having friends makes it worth it. All have to work at negotiating a relationship with typical students that minimizes their stigma. Some try to pass.

It is not clear what passing means. Does it mean not letting people know you can't read or does it mean not letting people know you are in Marge's program or are the two so interwoven that the problem evades analysis. For sure, the students have internalized the major values and goals of Hutton. Even if they know they won't walk across the stage, they want to. They longingly think of college, even though it may be far from their reach.

The Program

Officially, thirteen students are in the program although at most ten are present during any school day. One of the thirteen was never there while I observed. Each student who is in the program attends a regular homeroom (with typical students) and has a daily schedule that is similar, if not the same as a typical Hutton student. Six of the students spend the entire day at Hutton mostly attending regular classes with the other high school students. Some of these students are involved in extra curricular activities. Sara sings in the chorus and Pam plays on one of the varsity girls athletic teams. One of the students bowls in a league with students labeled mentally retarded. For the most part, those who have a full day program at Hutton are middle class white students. The remaining six students attend regular classes at Hutton in the morning and then go to vocational training programs (auto mechanic and carpentry) at a vocational center run by the school system in downtown Central City or to job placements. Three of the boys go to the city school run vocational center and then go to jobs. For the most part, the jobs that they are placed in are janitorial and are supported by CETA or other federally funded programs. There is a resource teacher down at the vocational center and the people at Hutton have mixed feelings about what goes on there. Some of the programs are thought to be excellent but Marge has some questions. At the beginning of the year, Marge complained about the resource teacher not being active in working with the special education students. She wrote a letter to the central office about it and she says things have gotten a lot better. Marge mentioned that there is an automechanics program there with a sign, offensive to her, hanging over it saying, "Automechanics for the Handicapped" but when I visited the center, I didn't see it. The principal of the Vocational Center is open to the inclusion of special education kids but is not familiar with special education and resents the other high school principals steering predominantly academically inferior students to his program. He feels that technical education had a bad image in the city and it is in part due to principals seeing the program as a dumping ground for students who might be more appropriately served in their home school. Programs at the center include computer technician, beautician, fashion design, food service, welding, graphic design, tool and dye making, automechanics and carpentry. While I did not investigate fully what the programs were like for the students for Marge's class, they seemed pleased with the diversity that it added to their day.

With a few exceptions, all the students in the program meet in Marge's room every fourth period for special instruction. This instruction consists of two activities: basic skills learning and preparation for the minimum competency test that is needed for graduation. During the time I was there, it was the Spring. Increasingly time was spent on preparation for the minimum competency test which was given at the end of the school year.

Basic skills instruction means that the curriculum is directed at having students learn such things as:

Reading and Ordering From a Menu
Restaurant Language
Computing Sales Tax
Reading Signs Around Town
Reading Bus Schedules
Locating Places on Map
Opening and Using Bank Accounts
Planning a Budget
Understanding Taxes

Marge used a workbook for basic skills and goes over the book and questions paragraph by paragraph with the students. Below is a description of such a lesson taken from my notes:

> Marge stood in front of the class to indicate that the fourth period work was about to start. Mac came walking in late. Marge said, "Well, nice to see you. You got here. Were you late?" He said, "Ya, maybe ten, fifteen minutes." Marge said sarcastically, "Well that's good." Mac said, "The bus broke down." Two or three of the students made sounds of disbelief, "Oh," "yea," "fat chance." Marge said, "The bus broke down. Come on Mac." Mac said, "Now you come on. You know that dude that use to run track and play basketball. He use to be in that class of yours. Well, he was on the same bus. What was his name? You just ask him. He was on the bus too." Marge said, "I don't think you are going to go all this way making up things. If you say that's what happened, that's what happened, but leave it to you to be on the bus that breaks down."
>
> Marge began, "What we are going to do today is apartments. Remember how to look for apartments in the paper. We started it yesterday. Now open the book to ad #1." Most everyone had the booklet folded to that place. Marge and Alfred went around checking each one. "Look at ad #1. Does the apartment have a stove and a refrigerator?" Somebody said, "No". A few people said, "yes". Marge said, "Who said no. It says right there that it has a stove and refrigerator. See it's abbreviated. Remember the list of abbreviations at the start of the lesson. What about pets?" Everyone said in unison, "No pets." Marge continued, "Remember, don't guess. Look them up. What does Stu stand for?" Maxine said, "Stereo." Marge said, "Large sunny stereo, no, that's not it. Studio. What's a studio apartment?" "It's a small apartment with a small bedroom." "What's STV/Frig.?" They went to the list of abbreviations and someone said after a wait, "Stove". She said, "That's right, stove and refrigerator."
>
> Marge went through all the abbreviations in the second ad and then the third. One had HDW/FLRS which stood for hardwood floors. She asked, "Anyone know what hardwood floors are? Are these hardwood floors?" Leroy said, "No these ain't hardwood. They tiles and concrete." Another abbreviation was GDN which

> stood for garden apartment. When she asked about that abbreviation someone yelled out garden and Mark said, "I should have thought of that." Marge gave an explanation of a garden apartment. "It's an apartment that is low to the ground where you can look out and see the lawn or the garden." She went through more of the ads in the book.
>
> She started a discussion about security deposits. She asked what that meant. Jason said, "When you pay one months rent ahead." She said, "That's right and you also usually have to pay rent plus the security deposit, so when you go to rent an apartment you usually need two, full months of rent. That means if it's $150, you need $300." Leroy said, "Why do they keep the security deposit?" Marge said, "That's because, if you mess it up, they use the money to fix it. What about references? Why would you need references?" Mac said, "It's someone to back you up." Marge said, "That's right. They want to find out if you are going to be a good clean tenant." At this point, everyone seemed tremendously interested in the lesson. Everyone was watching whoever was talking. Marge said, "If you had an apartment, would you want to rent to someone who didn't keep the place up? They also may want your employer as a reference." Someone said, "Why's that?" Marge said, "Would you want to rent to someone who didn't have a job and who couldn't pay?" Mark said, "Well, you can get other money besides having a job." Leroy said, "Now come on now. A lot of apartments aren't like that." Mac asked, "Can somebody evict you if you have a lot of kids or something?" Marge explained how that depends on what's in the lease and how it was important to read the lease. Philip said, "But people who own buildings, they rip you off." Marge ignored this but he repeated it. Marge said, "Ya, a lot of people get ripped off. Hollywood actresses and actors get ripped off. If the rich get ripped off, you can get ripped off too." Philip said, "I didn't mean get tricked. The landlord he would come and steal things from your house. That's what happened to my uncle..."

As the content of this particular lesson reveals, examples that are used in the book are far from the lives of the inner city students that are in the class. At least five of the students live in the city housing projects or other parts of inner city housing and do not know about studio apartments and hardwood floors. Further, many of the prices listed in the book are unrealistic given the current economic scene. The materials raise important issues for the students, security deposits and slum landlords. Marge is sometimes open to talking about such issues and although her perspective is clearly that of a middle class white person. But she engages all students in a give and take which seems to minimize the vast differences in the cultural experience between her and some of the students. Strangely enough, this cultural gap does not seem to interfere in the students liking her. This is in part because Marge is very direct with them, as well as with all the students she deals with, and they are direct with her. She has a quick wit and can out talk the students, and they respect this in her. In addition, her hard work and advocacy for them makes them feel she is on their side.

There is a wide variety of levels of functioning in the class and during such lessons, Jason makes noises indicating that what's going on is too easy for him. Other students have a difficult time following the lesson and others seem completely involved. In general, there is a high level of participation. With only seven or eight people in the room, Marge and her aide, Alfred, can involve most people in what is going on.

The second activity that dominates the fourth period is the minimum competency test. A year ago, the state regents instituted a policy that in order for a person to receive a high school diploma, they would have to pass a state wide minimum competency test, in addition to accumulating the necessary Carnegie units. Marge sees these requirements as oppressive keeping her from providing educational experiences that the students need. But she feels that in order for her students to have a chance in life, they have to have a diploma and is therefore dedicated to maximizing each student's chance of getting one. She feels that what is needed to pass courses and the test, is not what benefits her students the most. As she puts it:

> Lou, he really needs living skills, he doesn't need Shakespeare. The same with Philip. The Great Gatsby and Glass Menagerie, he needs that like a hole in the head. He is in regular English and doing fine. I record the stories so he can listen but he doesn't need that. Lou can't even take care of himself so he needs the French Revolution.

Another time she told me:

> What we need is a competency based program designed for each student in the program. It is silly to have kids spend four years sitting here when it makes no sense in terms of them. Some don't get diplomas any way.

The competency test and graduation were two of the most frequently mentioned topics during my observations. Alfred talks about it, so did the principal, and Marge mentioned it almost every time I visited. Success of the program is measured by getting diplomas. Toward the end of my observation, every fourth period with the exception of tuesdays was spent drilling for the minimum competency. During one period that I observed, Marge read paragraphs from an example test that the students had in front of them and then asked the students to pick the correct responses that were listed, to fill in blanks. She was drilling them for the reading comprehension section of the test.

> I was late to the fourth period. It had already started. Marge smiled as I came in and said, "Class, tell Mr. Bogdan what it is that you are doing now." Sara said, "We're studying for the minimum competency test to get your diploma." Marge started reading from an example test. "An onion is likely to make a person's eyes water. The oil in the onion turns into a vapor when exposed to the air. Smelling this vapor is one way to cry without having felt blank in the first blank." The students were to pick the letters (a,b,c or d) next to the words that fit in the blanks and write them on the paper. The correct answer was grief and place. She read through all the questions in unit 4 and then went over them and asked for the answers. She started with question 1. She asked each student for a set of answers. Most of the time they didn't get the correct answer on the first try. At the end Marge said, "Well, how did you do?" Philip said, "I only got three wrong." Marge said, "Terrific, very good. We'll get you across that stage yet."

As she told me, the regents had made a concession to the learning disabled lobby that students labeled learning disabled could have the reading comprehension part of the test read to them. In addition, they could bring calculators to the mathematic examination. Even with these modifications, some students are unlikely to pass. Students labeled mentally retarded were the only special education students that could get a modified diploma. Those students labeled emotionally disturbed had to take the test with no special compensations such as those given to the learning disabled.

Marge talked about the test and requirements on a number of occasions. One time I asked her how often she had the students study for the test. She said:

> Every day. To me, it's just a joke. They say these L.D. kids, you can read the test, they can bring in calculators. The state says this is a reading test and you can read it to them. They are saying pass them anyway you want. I talked to Pam's mother last night on the phone. She wanted to know what her chances of graduating would be. She is going to be in the twelfth grade next year. I told her that I would do everything that I could to have her pass. I am not going to let her fail. This is ridiculous. The whole thing is ridiculous and I tell you I would do anything to help them get through it. If I can get these kids to get their diploma, I'm going to do it.

Marge mentions with pride, that last year, three of her students graduated with diplomas. She feels an intense loyalty to "her kids". This loyalty transcends what she sees as silly state regulations, and abstract rules concerning state examinations. She will do anything to get them through it, she is not willing to hinder the possibility of getting a diploma even if it means having a curriculum that is irrelevant to what she perceives as their long term interests. "Making it" is a phrase that is used synonymously with "getting him to walk across that stage" which means getting a diploma. As she puts it, "I try to help them as much as I can. Kind of support them. If they need help, I am here to give it to them. These are my kids."

Marge with the help of a teacher who is knowledgeable in career counseling, wrote a small grant last year which supports a program of career education for the students. There are either trips, speakers or other career related activities. On trip day, the school bus leaves at approximately 8:30 and is gone most of the morning. Most of the students in the program choose to participate but there are always some that miss the bus. The trips also include students from the resource room across the hall. No typical kids participate. The idea of the trips is to introduce students to the world of work and instruct them as to the skills and attitudes needed to succeed in employment. Included in the program were ten trips to such places as the local newspaper, a brewery, a television studio, the airport, a hospital and various manufacturing plants. Some of the trips are described by the students as "boring" others "great". I only went on one trip, to the local newspaper. The career education teacher explained and asked questions of the tour guide which pointed out various kinds of jobs and employment related aspects of the work. What was emphasized in the talk was that this industry was mechanized and that there were very few jobs available. Those that were available went to people who were highly trained, if not with college graduates.

At one point in the tour, the vocational teacher said, "You see now how so many jobs that used to take muscle now take skill because you have all the machine to do the muscle. Lots of jobs awhile back, all it took was muscles." One of the boys on the tour responded, "That's all we got."

We got to one place and someone asked if there were any jobs that you didn't have to have an education for. The tour guide, a young college graduate obviously upwardly mobile, said, "Well, if you don't care what you do, you can get a job in the mailroom." Mark asked "how much does that pay?" The guide replied, "It pays as much as the pressroom. Only thing, there is no place to move up, the same thing with the press operators. That is a job that you'd stay in for your whole life."

The vocational teacher who was involved in the tour program laments the job situation. As she puts it, "there are just no jobs now. Ten years ago you could call up and you could get a job for anyone. With all this automation, you need skills to get work. These kids don't have it. We can place them through CETA but that doesn't lead anywhere." I asked if it wasn't depressing and Marge and the teacher talked about how it was more depressing to force these kids to sit through American History and high school English when what they really needed was survival skills.

The tours of factories and other business establishments varied. In trips to some of the larger factories, students told me the picture was not as bleak but by and large the program was introducing them to the world of work, and they were learning that they were marginal to it, marginal in the same way they are to Hutton High.

In addition to the activities already described, room 108 serves as a support center for the students in the program. Students can take their study halls in that room and use the time to get special help from Alfred, the teachers aide, and Marge. If a student is having problems with a particular subject and they are not getting anything out of the regular class sessions, they come to the room for tutoring. Other than the fourth period, there are never more than two or three students in room 108.

Marge and Alfred help the students in a number of ways. They explain assignments and suggest ways that they might tackle them. They provide audio recordings of readings they are assigned. They explain lessons that the students don't understand. They counsel and support, telling students that they can do it if they try. For the most part, the students in the program feel comfortable with Marge and Alfred and they come to her during the day to get a pat on the back or to unload some problem.

In another important way the program serves the students. Marge is the students' negotiator and advocate. If she spots trouble, if a student is not working or losing interest, or attendance falls down, Marge investigates and intercedes. She keeps up on where the students are in each class and confers with the teachers about progress. She represents the student to teachers that might not be familiar with the student and their problems. In addition, Marge advises and schedules each of the students. The official scheduling is done by computer but Marge, in conjunction with other school staff, makes sure that the schedules of the students contain teachers that they think will be supportive as well as a schedule that will meet their needs. As with the case of the vocational school resource teacher, Marge also sets things right when they are not working well for her students. Marge is a buffer, a person who provides flexibility, and some warmth and a personal representative in a school where students are thought of as being old enough to do things for themselves.

Some of the fieldtrips Sara did not participate in because the sites were not accessible by wheelchair. While Marge is an advocate for her students, she performs on a one to one basis. She is not sensitive to issues of access and other disabled rights issues that are being pressed for by those active in the disabled rights movement.

The students respect Alfred, listen to what he tells them, and talk to him about their problems. He sees some of them in their neighborhoods and has an excellent rapport with them. I asked him what he thought about the program. He told me:

> It makes sense, that is, for most people. Take someone like Jean, they manipulate it. It's good for those who really use it. When I was in school and there were kids like the ones here, they would feel humiliated. They would go into class and they would be asked to read and the teacher would tell them "come on now read." They couldn't read and they just felt humiliated. Some of them would stop coming or some of them would get after the teacher. The teacher would yell at them and they would yell right back at the teacher. This program makes it a lot easier for the kids who have got these kinds of problems.

Alfred assists in a number of ways. He tutors the students individually. He goes from student to student when Marge is giving a lesson to be sure they are on the right page and paying attention. He informally counsels them and helps control rowdiness. He goes on trips carrying Sara on and off the bus.

All the students in Marge's class have been designated as neurologically impaired or learning disabled and have been through the committee on the handicapped. All students in the class have I.E.P.'s (Individualized Education Program) but I was told and saw by inspection that "they are pretty much the same for each student." They vary as to the exact classes the students are in and the afternoon program but they are all the same where it says "Current Functioning".

> Auditory skills are strong enough to enable student to understand concepts presented in class discussions and lectures. Student can demonstrate understanding of concepts through alternative testing and evaluation format, e.g., oral exams, taped reports, taped oral responses to exam questions.

"Suggested Long Range Goals":

> Completion of regular classes having demonstrated mastery of the curriculum through alternative testing strategies.
>
> Student will pass competency tests. These tests can be read orally to the student by the L.D. teacher.

The Regular Class Teachers

Staff at the school including Mr. P. and Marge will tell you that all teachers at Hutton are not equally committed to providing the maximum learning environment for all students. Some are described as "just putting in time", others are people who "really care". As I already said, when the schedules are made up for the students in Marge's program they work it so that they are placed in classes where they feel the teachers "really care" and are not antagonistic toward the special education students. They suggest that some teachers are not as tolerant of diversity in their classes and would prefer not to have the students from the program with them. On the other hand, occasionally because of scheduling inevitabilities, students are placed with less desirable teachers and according to Marge and the principal, these placements seem to work out fine, also. On the whole, Marge feels positive about the teachers in the school and wonders if at times, she isn't a little hasty in judging a colleague unreceptive. During my visits, no incidences were reported to me of teachers acting in overt negative ways to special education students. Regular teachers relate with pride, stories of accomplishments with special education students. One story that was repeated was the student with one leg on the varsity swim team. Another, one of Marge's students going to the community college. I formally interviewed five regular teachers and talked to many more in the course of my observations about the program. Mrs. West's, an eleventh grade English teacher, positive comments are an articulate summary of the best experiences teachers have with Marge's program.

I asked her what she thought about the idea of integrating handicapped students in the school system. She said:

It is a good idea but only if you have somebody like Marge working with the teacher. It is alright if the kids are doing about the same thing or parallel things to the regular kids but to do a special lesson plan in a special curriculum for each handicapped kid is more than a teacher can do. Philip, he'll do a lot of the same things as the other kids. We read plays and novels, like the Great Gatsby. He doesn't read them but Marge went and put them on tape and he could listen. She works real hard to make sure that they have what they need to function with the regular class. Of course, he works at a different level.

If the kids are doing sentences and diagramming, I'd have Philip write simple sentences. The nice thing is that Marge finds out what we are doing. She will provide alternate material if he can't handle what is being done. One time, I had them write a play. Philip wrote one. It wasn't up to the quality of the others but he did put it down. He also gets his own vocabulary and spelling list from Marge.

One problem to face is that this is eleventh grade English that he is in, which means he is required to take the regents. It is suppose to count for one quarter of the mark. If he fails the regents but takes the competency test and he passes those, he gets sixty five averaged in as one quarter of his mark. I don't know if that is fair.

Having Philip in the class doesn't take all that much work but if I had a lot of kids like him, it would be hard especially if they were at very different levels. If I had a few that were about the same level that wouldn't be so bad. The important thing is that Philip tries. I like Philip. I have two other kids in one of my classes from Mrs. Pryor's room (a resource room with E.D. and E.M.R. kids). That is something else. They are behavior problems. They don't come. They don't have any motivation. I could do without them. Mrs. Meyle doesn't keep in contact the way Marge does. I have to take time to chase her down and I don't have that kind of time.

Back a couple of weeks, Philip started cutting and lying. Philip never lied before but he would tell Marge that he was in my class when he hadn't come. I don't know what it was but Marge got right after him.

I think there are three things that make a program successful. The first is the teacher contact - good rapport between the special ed teacher and the regular teacher. The second thing is that the special education teacher has to make an effort to go along with what is going on in the regular class. It may be just the same type of work but easier. The third thing is that the students have to be willing. You can't have behavior problems. A kid who is motivated but can't do the work, that's different than having someone who is disruptive or who cut or don't have any interest.

I asked if there was anything that she needed that might make taking special education students easier for her. She repeated a theme heard again and again among those who have contact with Marge's program.

> I separate serving Philip and money. I don't mind working with him. If they create extra discipline problems that's something different.

She began reflecting on Philip.

> I feel that it's important that an eleventh grader is in his own class, in the eleventh grade. The only thing that bothers me is I don't know how he feels. I know that he knows that the words that are given him are easier but I wonder how he feels inside. The kids treat him well. They like him. When he comes into the room they say 'Hi, Phil.' That's what they call him. The white kids say that. He sits with the black kids and he is very quiet but he gets along fine. It makes me feel good to have Philip in the class. I firmly believe that kids learn from each other so it is important that he be with other kids. He was really pleased with his grade at mid-semester and then he started goofing off. Kids like him can't do that. They have got to push and then keep at it. When he starts messing around, that's when Marge gets on him. Phil comes early so that we can talk a little. I think that is very important. That way, I don't have to call him up to talk to him about what he is going to do that day.
>
> But again, it's Marge that keeps on top of everything. You need someone who does things for you, not that you have to go after. I've got a lot to do this year. I'm the sophomore class advisor. The fact that Marge is there gives someone like Philip a sense of responsibility because he knows that there are people looking at him. If he was out in the school all by himself, he'd just be gobbled up. There is tremendous motivation created by knowing that Mrs. Katz is there; it keeps them on the straight and narrow.
>
> My biggest complaint is the size of our classes. We are suppose to have 110 to 125 students per day but we have more like 150. There is a lot of overload especially on the English. Someone told me I should file a grievance but who has the time. In Philip's class, there is 33. I teach five classes. I'm the sophomore class advisor. I don't even have time to be with my husband and clean house.

Another teacher who I talked to, a teacher who had been at Hutton during the academic heyday, stated positive feeling toward having special kids integrated but she too said that she would not be willing to make more than one lesson plan for her class. She talked about how the school had changed and how she taught to shoot for the middle. She said that she felt that those at both ends, the very gifted and the not so bright, suffered. Another teacher was not very positive about the attempt at integration.

> I find it frustrating. Some of them are on the fourth and third grade level. Some are doing well but it has to be geared for their level. One problem is always time. You don't have enough time. Now, Bob Porter, I don't know. He is so slow. He just doesn't get things done. With tests, I tell him just to hand it in as far as he got but he doesn't. I have to take him alone on a free period and only then do I learn where he's at. Some of them are no problem. Jason Brown, he adjusts beautifully. He has other problems but he is somebody who will really benefit when you give him extra time, you feel like you are accomplishing something. Jason is a loner. He doesn't participate in group activities. They all have a two minute speech to make that is coming up. The other day he came up to me and said, 'do you mind if I do the speech just to you?' He doesn't feel like be belongs to this group. Some of these kids have been accepted but Jason is a loner. Luca is a lovely boy. I have no problems withhim but if you ever saw him write, he knows it. I have somebody else, but you wouldn't know he had any problems. Marge's kids are eager to seek help, they want help but it is an awful struggle for them. They are not relaxed. You can see frustration written all over them. They want to do well but it is hard. Too bad we don't have graded classes. They'd feel better in there. They feel the pressure. Take Joe, we were reading Antigony, he couldn't read Antigony, so I wrote the story out in simple sentences and then quizzed him and the other special education students on it. They're really on junior high level. You really have to do your own lesson plan for them, at their level. In order for it to work, you really have to have a close-knit relationship between the special education and the regular teacher. She has to come to this class instead of me going to her. Time is of the essence. Scheduling is important. You have to figure the classes they are going to, Ken should be in a smaller, slower class. He is in with thirty six. Bob, he is so frustrated. I ask him if he wants to go to Marge's room and he says no. Maybe they ought to be in their own special class. They have not been laughed at. They are accepted beautifully but I'm not sure whether I should call on them or not. I'd like to see the program continue. We weren't given any help or guidelines. Being experienced, I could handle it but an inexperienced teacher ought to get some

> preparation. We need explicit goals for each kid. We need a sense of what you should be shooting for.

It can be seen from these remarks, while most of the sentiment expressed is positive, teachers feel ambivalent. Mainstreaming seems to be working. They derive some satisfaction from it but they are also concerned. Not knowing how the students themselves feel is a big issue. They assume they are suffering but from my talks with the students, the suffering seems worth it to them. The discomfort may be a projection on the teachers part of the uneasiness they feel with the students who are not up to standards.

The extra work that is entailed was mentioned by everyone. As long as Marge helps out, takes the major responsibility for her students, things are okay. It is not that teachers who have her students are not willing to do extra but they do not want the responsibility of making their class work for these students. With declining budgets, the teachers in Hutton have been asked to take more students than they are accustomed to. Some have other major responsibilities in the schools, not to mention their family, out of school responsibilities and some work outside the school to supplement their incomes which they say is inadequate to support their families. They are willing to give that extra hundred yards but they don't feel they have that extra mile.

One irony that was pointed out to me has to do with what one teacher expressed as "getting punished" for being good. The idea here is that those teachers who do well, who work hard at their jobs, handled the diversity of students in a positive way, are well liked and respected, - they are the ones that are always asked to do more. Those teachers who already are not doing "their share" are not asked. They get rewarded for being ineffective.

Conclusion

In most people's minds, the phrases "mainstreaming" and "disability" paint a clear picture. A child in a wheelchair, perhaps with cerebral palsy, or maybe mentally retarded, surrounded by non-disabled peers. This portrayal is deceptive. As I entered schools to start my observation, the clear concepts of "mainstreaming" and "disability" turned into mirages. They blurred when I tried to use them to order the murky world we were in.

How children are perceived, including whether they are thought of as disabled, and how they are dealt with varies from school district to school district, from school to school, and from place to place within a given school. In addition, who is considered handicapped and what specific type of handicapping conditions a student has varies over time. As the inner city young man illustrates, at one time students who were dropouts are now on the handicapped roster. In studying the records of students in the classes we observed in, we saw dramatic changes in official diagnoses.

This points to the necessity of looking at the particular situation and historical time the disability is defined in order to understand how people think about and use the concept of disability and mainstreaming in schools. We have been convinced through our research of the fruitfulness of seeing the various disability labels and mainstreaming as discretionary, yet imposing frames of mind rather than discrete conditions or practices that people engage in. They make the system of dealing with differences make sense giving order to the world. Terms like mental retardation when approached this way are not pathological conditions, rather, they are common sense notions that emerge in interactions and become lodged in the minds of people who are given the responsibility of educating and ordering our schools.

At Hutton High like all the schools we observed in, school personnel were facing declining enrollments and budget cutbacks. These intertangled with specific struggles over school closings, reduction in programming, racial balance, teacher union negotiations, and parent activists pressing for specific reforms. There were rifts between teachers and administrators, old timers and the new guard, parents and school personnel. School personnel's acceptance or rejection of new students labeled handicapped has to be understood, at least in part, as being unrelated to the specific issue of disabled children and the concept of mainstreaming. The changes suggested by public law 94-142 can be viewed as a vehicle to play out old struggles and wage on-going battles. The receptivity of administration and teachers to the inclusion of children defined as handicapped is related to their general receptivity to change and intimately tied to conflicts and patterns of relationships that are part of the on-going school structure.

In our visits to schools we have found many people who provide explanations of why mainstreaming could and could not work. Many had no understanding of how the concept might actually be practiced and what it might look like in their own work place. In defense of an anti-mainstreaming position we heard, "Other kids will make fun of them." "Regular teachers have not been trained to teach the handicapped." "Schools are not set up to accommodate those kinds of children." "To have children who can't control their bowels in with the regular kids is too much of a burden." "Schools have enough trouble now without this problem too." After awhile, the phrases repeated themselves and we could see how a vocabulary had developed to both defend and attack the proposed change. Some of the cliches were distortions of what was proposed and had no grounding in objective facts, others did.

What was striking was how the same objective conditions could be used on the one hand by someone as a reason not to include handicapped children and on the other hand for integration. At Hutton declining enrollment and an unfavorable racial balance was given as an explanation for taking more disabled youngsters.

In another secondary school, in the same district, the same problems were given as reasons not to have more disabled students. In fact, in one school, the principal was actively attempting to reduce the number of handicapped youngsters because he felt that they were a factor in having middle class white students transfer to private schools. There are other examples of the same objective situation being used in opposite ways. In one school the fact that typical students had never been exposed to children with severe disabilities was given as a reason for supporting integration. It would be a learning situation. For another, the fact that they had no experience meant that the handicapped would be persecuted. In another school, one teacher, who never had contact with disabled students, saw mainstreaming as a challenge, one that would help her with her mid life crisis. Another saw her lack of experience as disqualifying her from participation.

I am not suggesting that there are not objective conditions that facilitate or impede change. But what I am suggesting is that perhaps more important than the objective conditions is how people come to think about their work in general and the vocabulary they develop to justify their actions. The study of change in school has to include a discussion of the distinction between "reasons" and "excuses". Justifications and rationalizations are developed to facilitate or impede change. These cliches have to be understood as part of the participants vocabulary of motives rather than as reasons that necessarily relate to objective conditions.

I mentioned how Marge was tongue in cheek about her students being "learning disabled". In general, we found teachers and personnel working directly with students skeptical about student's official diagnoses and the official special education system. Administrators tended to be less irreverent and took the official diagnosis and official special education explanation for placements at face value. Some of the teachers including Marge that seemed to be effective in working with students did so by manipulating the system, that is, by using its symbols, its labels, to negotiate a situation beneficial to students.

Pupils designated "disabled" under public law 94-142 guidelines, are supposed to have I.E.P.'s. I.E.P. stands for individual education plan. The teacher who is in charge of the student, with consultation of specialists such as school psychologist and speech therapist, fill out a detailed form in which the goals for the student are outlined and activities and experiences that will be provided to meet these goals. The I.E.P. for each child is approved by the Committee on the Handicapped. School personnel differ in their perspective on the meaning of I.E.P.'s. Some take them quite seriously, others see them as administrative formality. While the I.E.P. is the official plan for the student, most teachers develop what we have termed "the unofficial I.E.P.'s." That is, the teachers have an unwritten plan about what they would like to accomplish with the student and how to go about it. In thinking through the unofficial I.E.P., teachers strongly take into consideration such private knowledge as the subjective quality of the services offered and the reputation of the people associated with them. Thus, in high schools special education students schedules are made up to purposely avoid certain teachers. There are working partnerships and trade agreements with specific teachers and programs. Elementary teachers visit and in other ways seek out insider information in looking for new placements for their older students. The official I.E.P. has no overt reference to these personal judgements and relationships that are so central to the teacher's understanding of what he or she thinks is best for a particular student. The teacher attempts to construct the official I.E.P. so as to placate all those involved so that the unofficial I.E.P. can be carried out. At times, this means diagnoses and pupil descriptions are manipulated to have the official I.E.P. align with the desired placement. Those who worked with students directly can work together in such manipulation. The Committee on the Handicapped meetings and the official I.E.P. takes on the character of what Irving Goffman calls "Front Stage".

Handicapping conditions, mainstreaming and special curriculum and services are ways of talking and thinking about things. Some use this vocabulary to negotiate situations in which children prosper and grow. At other times it is used to get rid of a problem.

Most discussions of special education are devoid of references to the larger system that programs operate in. It is as if special education programs do not operate within a school within a district and that to grasp what special education is you have to have a sense of the whole. We have found that not only is special education not mainstreamed in the discussions but that special education programs seldom exist as an integrated part of a system, in a sense they are add-ons.

With a few notable exceptions, in the schools we studied including Hutton, mainstreaming meant including children defined as handicapped in with their non handicapped peers. The children were add-ons to existing arrangements. In addition, new programs were appendages to the school system rather than being directly related to its structure and values. Criteria for successful programming included fitting into the existing arrangements and accepting the standard as a given.

No where was this more evident than at Hutton and the other high schools. Hutton honors academic achievement, the symbol of which was getting into college or for the slower students graduating or as they put it "walking across the stage". Students who did not achieve academically are marginal to the school, its failures. These high school programs were successful because they help students accumulate Carneige units and pass minimum competency based tests that were required for graduation. School personnel thought that the high school curriculum and the state testing system were irrelevant to student's needs (they were reading Silas Mariner and the Great Gatsby) but they worked with the students to get through. This involved drilling them for competeney tests and in other ways, pressing these students who did not fit into the mold enough to squeeze through.

Everything includes bending examination rules, daily rote memorization, and letting curriculum that might better prepare Pam to live in the world after high school, slide.

Another illustration of the lack of integration of special education into the total education system is the case of the administration of the programs for the handicapped. In a number of school districts, we observed confusion as to who these programs belong to and who was in charge of those children designated as disabled. Many school districts have an administrative position of director of special education but most school principals were given autonomy over the programs in their own schools. When special education students were more self contained, in segregated programs, the director of special educations authority was clear. At present we observed struggles between special education directors and principals concerning who was in charge where no clear administrative supervision of programs. Special education specialists and regular teachers indicated that they were confused about who was responsible for specific children and the programs they were working under. Often it was clear who had responsibility for individual children, who was in charge of coordinating programs, and bringing about change within the school was an open book.

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CHAPTER 3

When There's No Debate: A Program For Elementary School Students Which Has A Mission

D. Biklen

Driving past the large, brick, modern school building, that before declining enrollments served the racially mixed neighborhood in east Central City, it is hard to imagine that part of its first floor houses "Open School", a "free school" born in an old frame house more than ten years ago in a decade when many parents and educators said no to the regiment and values of American public school education. The popular press no longer counts schools like "Open School". Most people think they are all dead. Open School has changed who it serves and where it is located but it is far from dead. Rather than its identity primarily being that of a private alternative for middle class kids, it is now an alternative to segregated programs for severely disabled children partially funded in part with tax money.

Origins

"Open School" began its transformation incrementally. There was no master design. It evolved from "being an alternative to the public schools" to becoming a staging ground for innovative models of integration for disabled children.

The director described its beginnings this way:

> One of our daughters, our oldest one, was having a lot of difficulty in public school. She was a bright kid, but was feeling really upset about herself. She was showing it in tantrums, resistance, and general upset. That was when she was in the fourth grade. So, out of concern for our own child and for quality education, we and a number of other parents decided to start a school. The main focus would be the kids emotional and academic growth. The school would be more personal, more responsive to where the kids were.

There were ten children the first year, ages nine to twelve. In its second year the school accepted children at age five. Eventually the school grew to fifty children ages five to sixteen. A shift in goals has resulted in a decrease in the number of children and in their age range (now serves 4 to 8).

A few years after Open School opened, school districts began making direct referrals of children for whom they had no program. Some of the children were labeled emotionally disturbed. One thirteen year old was labeled "school phobic"; another thirteen year old had attempted suicide. And then, one year, the school enrolled a five year old child labeled "autistic". She had been attending a segregated school for disabled children operated by the local Association for Retarded Citizens. The family did not want her to continue in a "segregated program" and felt that their daughter had more potential than professionals had given her credit for. They wanted her to be around "normal kids". A teacher from Open School spent time with the child and recommended they take her. That was the first time a child with "really significant differences" had been accepted. Her language was severely impaired and the child seemed to have no sense of fear. She would race out into the middle of the street. Nor did she have a sense of social cues associated with safety.

The next year the school received calls on behalf of three other "significantly different children", one of whom was labeled autistic. The local school district had refused a program for this child. The family literally had no where to turn, except Open School open setting. Another child, a boy, had been labeled severely emotionally disturbed. He had spent a half year in the public school kindergarten before being expelled. The district had no program planned for him. A psychiatrist suggested that the family call Open School. The third child lived at the local mental retardation institution in a pediatric unit. He was the only child on the unit who could move about. Yet, each time visitors would walk through the area in which he lived, they would see him tied to a chair. The director of Open School and several of the staff had seen this boy with autistic like behavior forcibly restrained. They were moved by his need.

As part of adding these disabled children to the school, they literally created a special education component. One of the founders of the school was a professor of education in the local university. He began to involve masters students in a graduate program in emotional disturbance in "Open School". A field based program in which the students would work with the three incoming labeled children was developed.

It was not originally conceptualized as a mainstreaming program. The director and others just saw themselves responding to disabled children who had nothing. At first, the program was to operate mornings and the masters students would work with the labeled children in a separate classroom. Within two weeks, the teachers in the new room were integrating their activities with the teachers in the other rooms. It started off with the children eating together. Then they began to go on fieldtrips together. Then they began cooking together. Pretty soon it seemed clear that the two programs would simply merge. There had been no master plan. It had just happened.

That same year, the school accepted a fourth child. Tom Greenberg was excluded from public school. He had Downs Syndrome and had been labeled "severely emotionally disturbed and educably retarded" by school officials. He was a severe behavior problem. He had just entered junior high school, a transition that had not been adequately planned, handed a schedule his first day in jr. high and was expected to find his own way. He could not handle it. He acted out and then some days he simply sat down on the steps outside the school and refused to move. The staff did not know what to do with him. His parents called Open School and even though he was older than the other children, he was accepted.

The director remembers that year as "sort of haphazard. I don't feel we really had planned the integration. It just happened." From these tentative beginnings the open setting grew into a planned effort to integrate disabled and non-disabled children. The focus was on autistic, or what some of the staff call "autistic like" children. The next year, after the initial tentative effort with four labeled children, the school secured funding from the State's Department of Mental Retardation for increased staffing and a more concerted attempt to serve disabled children. Nine children labeled autistic entered school. And for each of the labeled children there were two typical children. The school consisted of three classrooms each with three "handicapped kids" and six "typical kids". The staff included a teacher, a teacher aide, and a masters student in each class. In addition, a speech and language specialist worked with children individually outside of the classroom setting. In following years a movement therapist was added to the staff and parent case workers became members of the school team.

Reactions to the school's new efforts were mixed. As the director explains it, some parents who had non-disabled students felt that the teachers were paying too much attention to the special kids, that their children weren't getting enough program. Some were also concerned about the acting out of the special children. They were asking about safety. "Were their kids going to be hurt?" Those concerns led to the fear among organizers of the school that there would be serious attrition. That never happened. Each year there was a waiting list of families interested in having their children attend.

For three of the next five years, the program was funded as a national demonstration in educational programming for severely emotionally disturbed children. The school staff had applied for and received a major grant from the Bureau for the Education of the Handicapped in the U.S. Office of Education to operate the school as a national demonstration model in integrating autistic and non-disabled children. What was initially a haphazard, or at least incremental, foray into the world of integration became a carefully planned, and much discussed setting.

The director now describes the school as an integration minded place:

> I guess the most general purpose is promoting the maximum possible social, emotional, and academic growth of each child in the room. . . . The reason for having an integrated classroom is that it promotes the social and emotional growth of both populations of kids, the kids who are labeled special and the kids who are typical.

The Actors and Their Stage

The Open School occupies half of the first floor of Burlington School, a modern two story brick and glass school building which was recently vacated, in the face of declining enrollments, by the Central City School District. They have four classrooms and a total of fifty one children, twelve of whom have disabilities. The rest of the Burlington sight serves as home for a Headstart pre-school program, a basic learning center of the Central City Developmental Disabilities Center (a local institution for retarded children) for severely multiply handicapped pre-schoolers, the Central City Child Care Coalition, the West End Day Care Center, and the city based pre-school program for retarded children.

The director of Open School's office occupies a converted classroom, about thirty feet by thirty feet, which has been divided into four sections. One section is for a lounge, another for a reception area, another as a meeting place for teachers, parents, support staff, and visitors.

At the end of the first floor hallway there is a large gymnasium. At the other end of the building, outside, there is a playground with a slide, jungle gym, sandbox, seesaws, and climbing bars. Open School regularly uses these areas.

In doing my observations, I focused on the "greenhouse room", named for a green two story play house that it contains. On my first visit to the school, the director went with me to the classroom. Outside the door were colored paper plant baskets with the names of the children on each. There were thirteen in all.

We walked into the greenhouse room. The director introduced me to the teacher, Heidi Whalen. She is a slender person---I later learned that one of her hobbies is modern dance---who on this day was dressed in pink cotton pants, a pastel colored plaid shirt, and tan work boots. She has long brown hair and an angular face. She is about five feet seven inches tall.

As I looked around the room, I saw two other young women, one a teacher aide and the other a graduate student, and a young man, also a graduate student. In one corner of the room, behind a bookcase which served as a partial barrier, much like a movable modular wall, the female graduate student was sitting next to Jamie, age 7. The teacher was asking Jamie to place orange circles on pictures of orange circles. "He's one of our special kids" the director told me. "We have four special kids and nine typical kids in this class. Although one of our typical kids is also dealing with a lot right now. His parents are split. And on top of that he's trying to figure out if he's brown, white, or what?"

The teacher aide, Shana, was engaged in a language development exercise with five of the children, one of whom was a "labeled" child. Her name is Peggy. Jim, the other graduate student, sat behind Peggy to help guide her in the activities. Shana was teaching the concepts of "left" and "right" by having each child trace his or her own left and right feet on large pieces of white paper.

While I was busy "checking out" the room, the head teacher, Heidi, gathered another group of children, seven in fact, for reading, or rather word recognition exercises. Heidi kneeled down next to an easel that had a newsprint pad on it. She wrote down the "key" words which the children suggested: pencil, plane, purple, propeller. She asked each child for a "key" word. Then after each child had given a "key" word and had it portrayed on the newsprint, Heidi asked each to restate his or her word.

What I did not know at the time, but would later discover, was that one of the children in the group was a "labeled" child.

I was immediately struck by the contents of the room. Every space occupied by decorations, equipment or teaching materials. Along the left side of the class are lockers, one for each student. Their names are spelled out on cards above the lockers. Also above the lockers are paper clocks telling different times of the school day, with the scheduled activity associated with the time: "choices", "news time", "snack time", "gym", "reading" and so on. Along the back wall are a waist high bank of heaters underneath a wall of windows. Bookcases separate the larger room from the individual work area in which Jamie had been working. The books are pre-school and beginner reading books. Above the heater, and partially obscuring one of the windows, are piles of boxes with activity materials in them as well as games like "Candy Land" and "Sorry". Next to the entrance to the classroom are plastic bins; these serve as individual storage trays for the childrens drawings and completed math and reading exercises. Next to these there's a small bathroom. There is a six foot by ten foot carpet on the floor next to the lockers. In the right hand rear quarter section of the class there are shelves laden with games, trucks, cars, toy animals, dolls, and blocks. Along the right wall is a bulletin board.

As the name of the classroom suggests, the large two story playhouse is indeed green. On the upper level, which the children reach by climbing a wooden ladder, there is a bedroom and living area. Underneath is a play kitchen with an eating table. The play house has an open doorway and large windows on the first floor.

On one shelf which separates a row of eating and activity tables large enough to seat the thirteen children and several teachers from the area that houses most of the toys there are a row of plastic glasses in which sweet potatoes, suspended by toothpicks, in water, are growing. Each has sprouted vines about five or six inches tall. And each plant has a child's name on it. To the left of these are a row of small spider plants, with a sign identifying them as "the greenhouse spider plants". Off to the right of the eating/activity table is a sign, made out of different colors of construction paper. Next to the colored paper is an arrow pointing at each with the name of the color spelled out. And, in a paper pocket are large replicas of crayons, also made out of construction paper, each with a different color. From any place one stands in the room there are shelves. Some hold books. Others hold boxes. Each box has a large hand drawn label made with a magic marker, usually on construction paper, identifying the contents: "puzzles", "pizza making equipment", "restaurant activity", "truck", "race track", "playdoh", "store game","crayons", "markers." One box says "barber shop", and another large one says "grocery store". Another says "airport".

On one wall there is a bright mural, perhaps eight feet wide and nine feet long on brown paper. It is of kids and trees and drawn by the children.

Also on the walls are various lists printed by the teachers in bright colored markers on newsprint sheets. One is entitled "letter of the week". The letter is "M". Underneath the title are sentences developed by the students, with pictures added by the teacher. The sentence in this case is "Maggie's mother likes to mop milk at McDonalds with Molly's monkey." The picture was of a woman mopping the floor at a McDonalds hamburger stand. Instead of a mop head, there was a brown monkey. Another list, next to the "M" list, also included a large picture, and read "Don't drop the dinosaur Dennis."

Several weeks later a new list would be prepared. This time the sound would be "W". The mural would portray a large picture of Woody Woodpecker.

Across the room, on the opposite wall, is still another list. This one bears the message "How to get the attention of others." The list includes suggestions: "Develop a big voice", "Get close", "Get eye contact", "Say the person's name".

The Children

All schools generate their own language. That language describes and in many ways defines events, behaviors (e.g., curricular strategies), people, and objects. In the school that I attended as a teenager, for example, the students who participated in vocational education programs were called pejoratively "the greasers", athletes were called jocks and those perceived as college bound academics were "the grubs". Open School has its own language. And it pervades virtually all conversations among staff in the setting. Like the example from my own school experience, it is a language for describing the children.

Throughout five months of observations, I never heard a staff person use the term "handicapped" and "disabled" was almost never used. This seemed remarkable, even astounding, in view of the fact that twelve of the children in the school would, in most people's eyes, be considered handicapped, very handicapped. Instead, the staff described the children with disabilities as "severely impaired", "severely involved", "pretty involved", "labeled", "special kids", "lower functioning and higher functioning", "delayed", "autistic like". But even these terms were not bandied about casually or frequently. There is a general discomfort with focusing on disability related language, almost as if it might stand in the way of development and growth.

It did not take me long to see that the staff had universally adopted their own terms of disabilities and were unwilling to call the children with disabilities "handicapped". Some of the terms they applied, like "pretty involved" or "lower functioning", were more descriptive of the children than categorical. That is, they did not use terms like mentally retarded, autistic, or emotionally disturbed. When a traditional category like "autistic" was used it invariably was used in a context of other words which indicated a lack of acceptance of traditional categories. The teachers and director both identified several of the children as having "autistic like behaviors". Autism is, in their minds, an overly broad term that leads to stereotypic characterizations of children. Hence they prefer treating such terms gingerly and with finesse. They used other terms like "special kids" and "labeled kids" as if to say these children have unique needs and might be regarded by others as "handicapped" but "we do not want society to write them off by calling them handicapped" and they use the word "delayed" to communicate a sense of optimism about a child's potential for development. For example, Jamie a child who has yet displayed no verbal language, is described by the head teacher as "delayed in his language."

The greenhouse room has thirteen children, four of whom are "labeled". They range in age from 5-6, though Jamie is 7 going on 8. The non-disabled or "typical" children exhibit a range of abilities; for example several can read easily and voluminously while others are just learning to read. Similarly, the "labeled" children present a remarkable range of abilities and needs. The following is a thumbnail description of the labeled children.

Jamie is average size for a seven year old. But he is the biggest and oldest child in the greenhouse room. He also has the severest disability in that he can not speak. He uses five or six signs to express certain needs, like the desire for food or drink. He does not read. Margaret, his own resource teacher, works with him on such things as sorting colored wood beads, matching shapes, and using particular signs to get things that he wants. He eats lunch and snacks without help at the long table with the other children.

Margaret, his resource teacher, previously worked in a residential treatment center for "autistic and severely retarded children" (these are my own terms). Jamie lives in a group home that is operated locally by the State Office of Mental Retardation.

Heidi, the head teacher, describes Jamie as having "developmental delays" and "delayed language". Her goals for Jamie are growth in the areas where he has "delays" and "integration". "Last year" she explained, "Jamie was out of the room probably seventy five percent of the time. He was with (typical) kids for cooking, to go to the library on fridays" but that was all. In Heidi's words "the rest of the time he was one to one".

While the head teacher's goal for Jamie was integration, that still meant having a teacher with him "constantly". "There was never any time when Jamie was by himself." Part of the reason for providing a full time teacher for Jamie was his behavior. At the beginning of the year he would pull other people's hair. "It started with his teacher's hair" Heidi explains, "If you are placing a demand on Jamie that he didn't want to respond to, he would pull your hair." Also, when teachers hugged him, a frequently used strategy for telling Jamie he had done something well, "his immediate response was to get carried away" (i.e., to pull hair).

At first the teachers told Jamie "no, don't pull hair," but that seemed to set him off. He pulled all the more. Then they reduced their command to a simple "no!" That did not work either. The third intervention worked. "We put ourselves behind Jamie and with our arms around him we held on to his hands and put him on the floor real fast. We figured words weren't doing it" Heidi explained "So body language became a way of saying no without words. That worked."

The teachers attended to Jamie's hair pulling for a month before he stopped that behavior. Now he rarely pulls hair. As Heidi explains "it still happens once in a great while where he gets silly, usually with my hair because it is so long or maybe when he is passing by one of the other kids, but it happens so rarely that it's not even an issue any more." Once, near the end of the year, the children were in line to go outside. Jamie began to run his hands through the hair of the girl in front of him. In a flash, two teachers eyed Jamie and moved closer to him, ready to intervene. When he put his hands down and took the hand of the girl next to him, both teachers smiled as if in relief. A victory for Jamie.

Most of Jamie's time is highly structured. He participates in many of the group events of the classroom, including meeting and sharing time, snack, gym, field trips, trips to the library and to a local store, and other such events. He stays in the greenhouse room for much of the rest of the day, but receives one to one assistance in sorting, matching, and other similar activities. He leaves the room for language work with the language specialist. He also receives extra gym time to work on gross motor coordination; one or two other typical children participate in these special trips to the gym (they usually occurred during "choice" time); more children asked to go with Jamie than are permitted to go. It is a valued activity.

When allowed "free" time Jamie plays tambourines and a large plastic hour glass type toy. If left to his own devices, he invariably goes over to the window and does what his teachers call "self stiming", which in his case is standing in front of the heat air duct where the air can blow through his hair, flipping his hands outward, walking back and forth along the heaters, twirling things like toys in his hands, and banging things.

If told by a teacher that it is time for gym, Jamie understands. He gets up and takes the teacher's hand and goes for the ball and the door almost simultaneously. The teachers see this as a sign of his growth, of his potential for independence.

They also see progress in his interactions. "In terms of his interacting with other kids" Heidi explains, "it has been ions from where he started. He is noticing other kids. He's in the gym when he is playing with the ball. He is playing with other kids (chasing after the ball, bouncing it to others, catching it when it is thrown). In meeting he sits with the other kids, comes up and checks his name and goes back to his seat. Today we had square dancing at the end of the day and he danced with Jacqueline. He looked at her when he was dancing". Earlier in the year, probably because of the hair pulling incidents, children tended to shy away from Jamie. Heidi feels good about the changes she has seen for both Jamie, but also for his "typical" peers: "Kids tended to be frightened of Jamie. Now that is just totally gone. That has been amazing to watch. They don't really treat him like he is a little person or younger than they are. Jamie is just Jamie." Then Heidi added, quickly, "I think they recognize he is a special person, that he is not the same as they are. They talk about the fact that he can't talk. Like one day Mario was watching Jamie sign at snack time and he asked how people who sign can talk on the telephone."

The other children also wonder why Jamie, at age 7, doesn't talk yet. On the other hand, Heidi thinks they admire his uninhibited nature. "When he wants to dance he just dances." She described Mario following Jamie around the gym, bouncing the ball. She interpreted this as Mario admiring Jamie's agility. I wondered about that. To me Jamie seemed still somewhat awkward in his bouncing.

As an observer, I sometimes questioned if the teachers were not at times trying to over compensate for Jamie. Both the head teacher and the support teacher told me, independently, "Jamie is one of the most valued children in the class." This was certainly not true if one were to use the usual standard of close personal friendship to measure valuing. Yet it *did* seem that the students felt *comfortable* with Jamie. They sat next to him. They asked questions about Jamie; they cheered at his birthday; they begged to go with him to the gym. It was hard for me to say he was the most valued. But it was undoubtedly true that he was *valued*.

Tommy: On March 6, the staff meeting began with a discussion of Tommy. Heidi, the head teacher, and Shana, Jim, Peggy, Patty (the "support teacher") and Abigail (a two day a week student volunteer/intern) participated.

"He is doing a lot of talking this week" Heidi declared. "He is really spacie."

Patty agreed that Tommy had been talking, in her words, "inappropriately". Apparently, Tommy had been repeatedly saying "Jackie don't" and "Jackie stop it". Yet, as far as the teachers could discern, there is no real Jackie in Tom's life. She is Tommy's fantasy character.

One of the teachers suggested that his fantasy might be "delayed echolalic behavior."

Abigail offered another example of what the teachers referred to as "Tommy's behavior." "Today he said, 'Elana has been kicking me'". Yet from Abigail's account, Elana was no where near Tommy.

Shana remembered, however, that Elana had kicked Tommy the day before. He was still talking about it, as if it were an immediate occurrence, such as a child at two and one half years developmental level might. It is at that age that children often relate past events as immediate occurrences.

He also has a habit of repeatedly mentioning things that happened at home.

To counter Tommy's behavior, the teachers decided to have one person follow him around on successive days. They would observe and record his language, to see if there were particular contexts in which he uses certain language.

Tom is slender. As for coordination he is somewhat awkward and "flappy" when he runs. His head teacher says his "body is sort of tilted." His movement is not fluid and athletic. It is rather uncoordinated and tight.

Tommy is not easily cataloged. Heidi describes him as having "many gaps." The manner in which his non-disabled peers react to him confirms her view. For example, while his language is often cryptic and not well articulated, he occasionally lets loose a full, long sentence or a rather sophisticated idea. The range of verbal behaviors is extraordinary. He may remember the words to a whole song. While this is in no way unusual for a seven year old, it sometimes surprises his peers who expect him to remember only a few words.

The other children definitely recognize Tommy's "differences". When he turned seven, several of the other children were surprised that he was seven. They also are surprised when Tommy performs seven year old behaviors in a typical fashion. Shanara, for example, one of the non-disabled children, was surprised when Tommy announced that he had spent the weekend riding his bicycle. "You use training wheels don't you?" she asked. But he had not.

When the typical children see Tommy doing well (e.g. writing clearly or saying a full sentence) a few sometime remark "good Tommy. That's really good."

Tom in turn heaps praise and other commands on Peggy, another of the "labeled" children.

Tommy is quite a social child, more so than any of the other children in the class. It is not uncommon to see him in the thick of a bicycle race, a climbing game, or other group activity. His ability to participate in such events seems related to his ability to pick up on cues of other children. Heidi, his teacher, notes that he spends a lot of his day watching what other kids are doing and then modeling his behavior after theirs. In her words, "that gives him a little plus. He's so turned on to his peers. Like if they are running and playing in the playground, from a distance it sounds like Tommy is talking along with everybody else when really all he is doing is mimicking the intonations. And I don't think the other kids pick up that Tommy isn't talking on his own. It is like Tommy is one of the gang. That really helps him out a lot."

When the school year began, Tommy struck up a friendship with Randy, one of the youngest in the class. They were inseparable. Yet their relationship has become an on and off one. Heidi thinks that the distance between them, or Randy's desire at times to stay away from Tommy is in reaction to Tom's tendency to want his own way all the time. She explains Tom's behavior as, in part at least, a reaction to home life. "Mom feels she wants to hold on to Tommy. Tommy is the last child. Mom smothers him with attention and so. . . .Here he wants control." "Sometimes he comes in here and literally pushes others around. He wants to be in total control."

Teachers at the school cannot explain exactly why Tommy is the way he is. Possible explanations run the gamut from the physiological (neurological damage) to the psycho-social (relations with family members). But whatever the cause or causes, the teachers do not talk about it unless asked. Heidi sees him as becoming more assertive. He says no a lot more now. "At the beginning of the year," she explained "whatever you wanted Tommy to do, he was doing it." He was simply not asserting himself. Now he can be positively contrary. Tommy's parent worker, Bertha, also sees him at an early developmental stage: "It is like someone who is going through the terrible twos. Whatever you want, I am going to do the opposite." Heidi admits she finds such behavior trying but "you have to keep in the back of your mind that he's making real progress, that it's important for him to go through it, that it's part of developing a strong ego."

Peggy: Peggy, like Tommy, has what the teachers call gaps. But the two children are in fact quite different.

Heidi, the head teacher, sees Peggy's performance in class, and in all social situations, as unusually (i.e. more than usual) influenced by her emotional condition at the moment. If you did not pay attention to her emotional state, you might think that her sporadic language ability was random. That is to say, her "gaps" seem at first baffling, perhaps unexplainable. Then, when she articulates a succinct and "appropriate" idea in a correctly formed sentence it almost seems spontaneous and unrelated to anything. But these gaps and sporadic appropriate behaviors are not all a mystery. Heidi puts it this way, "a lot of how Peggy behaves is directly related to how she's feeling. Where Tommy can be totally calm and focused and you ask him a question and he can't answer it. That happens even when he seems to be trying hardest. The difference with Peggy is that when she is real tense or real reserved and upset then she cannot give the answer. But if she is calm and focused, she can do it!"

Peggy is quite a lot heavier than Tom, and so she appears less coordinated, but Heidi thinks she is equally capable of what is called "gross motor coordination." She is on what is called the Feingold Diet, a special diet that does not include food additives. The theory of this diet is that additives cause some children to become more "hyper-active". Removal of foods with additives from a child's diet is supposed to help the child gain better control of his or her behaviors. Heidi wonders whether the diet has merit or not, yet she does think Peggy may be changing as a result of using the diet. Her change may relate to the diet, to people's expectations about the diet, or to the increased attention Peggy receives because of the diet.

Interestingly, despite the fact that Peggy's intellectual performance exceeds that of Tommy, she usually has a staff member right close to her, particularly in group activities. Tommy does not. When the class has a meeting, or morning sharing time, or choices, one staff person invariably sits in a chair behind Peggy's chair usually with a hand on her shoulder or hip or a guiding arm for an activity.

At times, indeed most times, Peggy seems unconnected to the other children. She becomes "contrary". One morning when the teacher asked the kids to put on their shoes to go outside, she picked hers up and threw them across the room. Later that same day while several children were practicing writing on paper tablets, Peggy used the magic markers to write all over the table. Then she smiled, as if to be all the more devilish. Next, she got up, walked casually around the room, flipping puzzles, papers, and pens on the floor. On another day, while riding the school bus, she undid her seatbelt, got up and unlocked the school bus door. Now, what seemed to be bothering teachers was that during the past week she had been going up and slapping some of her classmates on the chest.

The obvious message from all of these events was, according to the teacher's perspective, that Peggy wanted attention and obviously found it difficult to get attention in more reasonable ways.

On the one hand, the teachers felt pleased that she was interacting at all with the other children, even if it was negative. But they wondered out loud to each other how they should treat the events. Should they consistently say "no" when Peggy hurt another child? Should they give her an explanation each time about why a particular act was wrong? Would that be "reinforcing" what the teachers labeled "her shenanigans?"

What follows is a typical discussion among the teachers at a staff meeting:

> "What she wants is attention," Mary said. "If we give her a long lengthy explanation for why she shouldn't do what she is doing, we may be giving her just what she wants. And, also, I think we should say a quick no and then walk away before she has a chance to grin."
>
> "She has an incredible grin," Heidi added laughingly. But then Heidi wondered, "Does she need 'No, you can't hit kids' or is 'No' enough?"
>
> "Lets keep the verbal stuff short." Sally argued.
>
> "Well but should we say 'No' and then take her in the hall?" Heidi asked. "Well we should say 'No' real quickly" Sally said. "We don't need to say she doesn't need to be with kids".
>
> "Well," Heidi said "We could take her in the hall and if she knows that she shouldn't be hitting kids then that is the one activity, hitting of kids, for which we should take her in the hall."
>
> "Is that the only thing you take her into the hall for" Shana asked. "Because the other day I took her in the hall for writing on the table."
>
> "I think only for hitting" Heidi said. Sally nodded her head. Then Heidi asked "What should we say when she is in the hall? Should we say, 'are you ready to come back now?'"
>
> "You should give it a minute or two," Shana suggested.
>
> "The other day", Heidi recalled, "she came back into our meeting and she hit me and so I put her back out there and then I said, 'You can come back when you are ready.' So the second time when she came back in, she was fine." Heidi paused and then continued, "I she hasn't been hitting but has been doing something else,

something difficult, I think we should say no and have her sit alone away from kids."

"But she is just as interested in the negative attention as in the positive," Shana argued. "One is as good as the other".

"It's not as though she doesn't know the difference," Heidi said. "Like today all she wanted was negative. She kept putting on her purposeful witchie voice."

"But she looked real happy getting on the bus", Shana noted.

"Ya, she got on that bus and said 'boy I really gave them a run for their money today.'" "She can be perfectly charming like today, when I had her sitting down on the milk crate. I went away and she got up and walked over and offered to help you ( ), and Jamie. She really knows what she is up to."

At the end of that staff meeting, the teachers agreed on a concerted strategy to address Peggy's tough behaviors. If she behaved negatively, they would simply say "no," with no explanation. They were convinced that she fully understood what was acceptable and unacceptable behavior and the why of it all. They wanted to avoid reinforcing her "difficult behaviors".

The teachers used a number of behavioral terms in reference to working with Peggy, as they do in reference to their work with Jamie. They spoke of "reinforcing", and "negative" behaviors. Yet these words came out unobtrusively and not as part of a jargon filled conversation. The teachers did not use terms like "extinguished behaviors", "behavioral technology", "contingency management" and so forth. Indeed, such language would seem out of place in this environment. It would create a sense of the children being manipulatable objects. In fact, the teachers did adhere to a behavioral approach, namely that actions have consequences and that all people respond to different stimuli (i.e. treatment, actions). Yet they practice this belief in the context of a very personal and consciously humanistic environment. The teachers were intend upon creating a warm, supportive environment in which children were responded to individually, yet also if necessary, in a conscious and systematic fashion. The teacher's approach to Peggy exemplified this. Their behaviors were no more random or unpredictable than hers.

Billy: It was hard for me to tell that Billy was in any way a special child. He reads; he writes; he plays actively with the other children; other children look up to him.

But, it has not always been so. Heidi calls his change during the time he has been in the greenhouse room "incredible". "When I first met Billy, he was what you would call an extremely withdrawn child. He had language, but did not use it. He was afraid of interacting with other kids. He spent most of his time in the corner, by himself, drawing. And he could not tolerate any changes in his schedule. Everything had to be in the right place. Everything had to be orderly. If a field trip was supposed to happen and didn't," Heidi related "he'd scream. He'd do that even if his locker wouldn't open." One time he went to get the paper towels which are supposed to be next to the sink. When he could not find them, he stood there and screamed. If a bigger change occurred, like a teacher being absent, he would get anxious and cry. And for each of these situations it seemed impossible for Billy to explain what he was feeling.

As I observed Billy over the course of six months, I saw some milder versions of these events. One day, for example, the head teacher was playing a bingo game with six of the children. Billy had his card in front of him but did not pay attention as the teacher called out numbers. The reason for his lack of involvement was that apparently he kn[illegible] be over. He [illegible].

The teachers used several strategies to [illegible], to bring Billy "out of himself". First, they made a clock with him. The clock would be used to identify the amount of time he had to spend in a group situation with other children. Second, they created group activities which were of interest to Billy. Heidi called this "a lot of conscious, structured orchestration."

Billy is still one of the quieter children in the room. He expresses his feelings less often and less openly than most of the other children. But it is literally impossible to see how he is significantly different from the other children. Heidi concludes "if I had to pick the thing that has been most rewarding, that's probably it, watching Billy grow."

Next year Billy is going to a regular public school class, with no special education services.

A Typical and Not So Typical School

An easy way to discover the nature of the glass house room and the school of which is a part is to ask and answer the question "in what ways is this classroom and school different from or similar to the typical modern American school?"

In some ways it is indeed typical. The school building is a [illegible] two story, glass and brick building. It was constructed to be a school. And it looks like a regular school. It has an office, a gymnasium, terrazzo hallways, lockers, large glass windows, a playroom with climbing apparatus, and average size classrooms. The school day is five and one half-hours long. New students receive screening tests to assess their ability to recognize colors, to recognize objects, to count, to identify words, and so forth. At the end of each year, students take achievement tests. The curriculum includes mathematics, reading, music, art and gym, among other things, thus covering all of the major substantive areas to be found in any elementary curriculum. Children learn to read and write by completing sentences like "I am afraid when. . .", by making up words that begin with particular letters, by matching objects to words, and so forth. Also, as in many school programs, resource teachers assist certain children in the area of language development. On academics, the head teacher sums up her perception of how typical the Open School is: "I'd say we are above average here. When I think of the program my kids are getting in my classroom as compared to most kindergartens. Our kids are leaving being able to use words and know all their numbers and fine motors. They have written their own books and can read their own books. They can add and subtract. While she identifies such skills as above average, indeed many kindergarten and particularly combined kindergarten and first grade programs are able to turn out children with such skills.

The school is typical in some other ways as well. The school has black children, disabled children, white children, boys and girls, middle income children, and poor children. Socio-economically it is mixed. The teachers are mostly in their late twenties and early thirties. Most are women, although several are men.

Like so many elementary classrooms, the greenhouse room is packed with stimulating materials, toys, posters, children's art, plants, and decorations. It looks like a classroom, though admittedly more like a kindergarten (because it does not have rows of desks) than a second or third grade. But this also seems rather typical since most of the children are five years old.

A typical day in the greenhouse room includes many of the elements of typical pre-k, k, and first grade elementary school. The day begins with a meeting, with identification of the day, month, and year, and with sharing of personal experiences the evening or day before. Then comes "skills work", a time to learn numbers and letters. Next comes snack time, then something called "choices" in which the class breaks into three groups, one labeled child in each, with Jamie receiving one on one instruction. "Choices" might typically involve playing a restaurant game (involves numbers, writing, role playing), making a mural, or making puzzles. Then the class turns to math or reading before lunch. After lunch there is a brief rest period before gym or a trip to the library. Finally, there might be a special project, like feeding the birds or making colored pictures by doing potato printing.

The teachers talk amongst themselves about the children, both about the progress being made and about the difficulties. They get together in staff meetings after school to discuss particular children's needs. This occurs once a week. And sometimes they swap "war stories" like about how one of the kids made a "poop" in the community swimming pool or how several of the non-disabled children were overheard mimicking how the teachers work with one of the children with a disability.

Yet while all of this sounds quite typical, indeed unremarkable, there was much in the setting and in the thoughts and actions of every one associated with it which made it extraordinarily unusual. When I first heard that this school was integrating severely disabled children, that is children with so called autistic like behaviors, multiple handicaps, and in a couple of instances severe retardation with children who have no disabilities, I wondered "what is the appeal of such a school to parents of children who have no disabilities?" I wondered if the school officials might not have difficulty finding non-disabled children to attend. In fact, this is one of the unusual things about the school. There is still a waiting list of non-disabled and disabled children alike. And remarkably, parents of non-disabled children are willing to pay fifteen hundred dollars for their children to attend the school. Yet they still line up to get inside the door. But why? That is what I intended to discover.

The school lives by at least three beliefs or commitments. First, the level of parent involvement far exceeds the usual level of parent involvement found in a public school. Second, the teachers, the staff, and parents display an open affection for and attention to the disclosure of feelings. As one of the support teachers put it to me "we are as concerned with affect as we are with academics. In fact, the two cannot be easily separated." Third, and finally, the school has a central mission, to demonstrate that integration can work. Of course other values stand out, for instance, a strong commitment to learning about the subtleties of children's behavior, about learning, and about strategies to promote learning, particularly with children who might be written off as unteachable. The teachers see themselves as detectives. One teacher told me a story of how a child who was not talking was taught to read. The teacher found that he had an interest in reading and so developed a series of instructions for him each day. These instructions were his activities. As it turned out, although his language was rather undeveloped verbally, he was able to read complex requests and was able to carry them out one after the other. Clearly, the teachers value learning how to reach individual children. Also, they have a strong belief in the possibility of individual change. Wall posters, conversations among teachers and parents, items in the school news letters, all reveal that people associated with the school consider integration of disabled and non-disabled children as an issue closely connected to other social justice causes in society, with racial integration, with the peace movement, with the anti-nuclear struggle, with feminism, and with efforts to avoid elitism and over professionalization. Yet if one had to identify those few principles or beliefs which most capture the spirit of the setting, their consumer power (parent involvement) affective education, and integration.

Each of the following aspects or qualities of the school, all of which are rather atypical for a school environment, either because of what they are or for the degree of their presence, help describe and/or promote the three central principles noted above:

Valuing Each Child: One is constantly reminded, by events in the setting, that the staff value each child. The children who are most capable in terms of their reading, language, math, and artistic abilities receive the typical accolades that seem to come to elementary school age children in most school settings. What seems unusual here, though, is the extraordinary tension, concern, and seriousness given to children who are not progressing rapidly or at the usual developmental levels. High degrees of attention come to children with severe emotional needs, and developmental delays, and other problems associated with disabilities. Two examples come to mind. At one staff meeting the teachers spent forty five minutes discussing one child, Jamie. And the discussion concerned whether or not he should be given a few minutes between activities to walk around the classroom unattended. The teachers spent as much time and gave as much seriousness to this discussion as teachers in another school setting would to the discussion of, for example, how to teach sophisticated mathematical equations to advanced high school students:

> The teachers spent most of the staff meeting talking about Jamie's prospects for a regular school placement, that is in a special class located in a regular school, for the next school year. The hoped for program would be located at a nearby elementary school. The teachers' concern was how to make current programming in the open setting appropriate to the next setting in which Jamie would be placed. How could the teachers in the open setting adapt their own curriculum to help Jamie prepare for and succeed in his next school program.
>
> The language specialist described the classroom at the neighborhood school which he might attend: "It is a TMR class but they are all kids like Jamie. They're all Jamies in that classroom. She, the teacher, has them all sitting down. They can get up to do structured things like to get their coat or to get a lunchbox or to get a piece of paper. He has got to be ready for that. That's the real world. We really just have two months to go. There is no point in giving him so much freedom to roam around if he is going to have to sit in a chair when he gets there. If we do that, he is not going to be ready and he needs to be ready because that's a tough situation for him."
>
> Heidi spoke next. "Well, I do feel like we need to structure but I really want him to be able to walk around. I mean he is so off balance in walking and he is bumping into stuff all the time because he is used to being held, having his hand held every time he walks around. I mean he is knocking into things not because he's grabbing them saying 'Oh, this is great, I haven't tried this before and getting into the dirt or plants or something like that,' he is knocking into things because he is leaning over. He has got such lousy balance. I feel like we need to work on that." Heidi continued, saying, "I'd really like to get him to be able to be free without being in a great big football field. He has got to learn to do something more than bounce the ball in the gym and self-stim by the heater."
>
> Peggy tried to summarize what had been said. "So are we agreed that we'll go back to the structured system and not give him that free time? We'll have a half hour of work and then five minutes off but have him go to his space over there and play with the musical instruments?" The other teachers agreed.
>
> The language teacher added, "If we do have him walking places, it should be structured so that he is going to get his coat or he is going to the bathroom or doing something that needs doing so he will be ready for that class when he gets there next year. It is a highly structured place so I think we need to have things structured for him so he is not just moving back and forth along the heater." One of

> Jamie's favorite activities is walking back and forth along the heater which is located next to the wall of windows at the back of the room. He stops occasionally by the heating duct to have the heat blow through his hair. Then he dances on his toes, rubbing his hand on the top of the heater, as he moves along it.

Our second example concerns a non-disabled child named Sanford. He is a five year old whose parents live apart. Two days each week he attends an afternoon program at a neighborhood center. On two other days he goes to a babysitter's house. And on the remaining school day he goes home early; his mother takes care of him. One day I noticed that he was grumpy and seemingly "down". Heidi spent a good deal of time talking to him and then shared her conversation with me:

> "He came in upset and was taking it out on the other kids. A lot of cold pricklies were coming out of his mouth. (she often labels hostile or name calling kinds of remarks from the children as "cold pricklies") So finally I said to Sanford, 'What is wrong. I mean really something must have happened to make you so upset'. And Sanford said, 'Well I know what happened.' 'Well, what then' I asked. 'Well,' he told me, giving a big sigh like this 'I got up this morning and I got myself dressed and I went down and I had breakfast and I got out to the bus stop and would you believe it? Does the bus come? No. The bus does not come. And so I get a ride. I mean I get in the car and you know what? The bus comes. So I gotta get out of the car and I gotta get on the bus and then I get to school. And that makes me upset.' (Heidi laughed as she finished telling the story from Sanford's point of view.) 'Well, why didn't you tell me?' I asked. Then Sanford said 'Well, could you have done anything about it if I had told you?' And so I said, 'Well, we could have both laughed about it. We could have made jokes up about it.' 'Ya,' Sanford said, 'that would have made me feel better. I like to be made to feel better.'"

Helping children express their feelings is central to the classroom life, and one obvious product of the commitment that teachers demonstrate for valuing each child. Sanford gets a lot of attention for his feelings because he is experiencing "a really difficult relationship with his father". On another occasion, Heidi explained her concern for Sanford:

> "Yes, after the last home visit Sanford came in here unloading a lot of cold pricklies and I sat down with him and I said 'Sanford did you have a visit with your dad?' Sanford said, 'yes.'" And then Heidi explained to me, "I feel like I'm guessing half the time to draw out and find out what's been happening with him because he doesn't share it and he doesn't want to talk about it but he needs to talk about it." Then Heidi said, "I said to Sanford, 'So your father brought you home and you must have gone outside and played with him. Did you do that?'" Sanford said, 'No, my dad was tired. He went to sleep.' Then Heidi said, "Oh well, I bet when your dad woke up, he must have read stories to you for supper?" Sanford said, 'No, he just kept sleeping.' So then I said, 'Well, when he woke up, you had supper together huh.' Sanford said, 'No.' So I asked him, 'Did you have to make your own supper and eat your supper alone?' And he said, 'yes.' So I said, 'Well, when your dad woke up, did he read you some stories? He must have read you some stories and watched tv with you huh?' And Sanford said, 'No he just had to sleep. My dad works hard and when he gets tired he really needs his sleep.'" And then Heidi said, "'Well when your dad did wake up, he must have taken you upstairs and tucked you into bed huh?' And Sanford said, 'No, he was still sleeping.' Then I said, 'You must have been pretty mad to wait up for so long for a visit with your dad and then to have him sleep the whole time.' But Sanford said, 'It's okay.'" Then Cindy apparently said, "'It's okay to feel angry.'" After relating this, Heidi turned to me and said, "Then Sanford looked up into my face and he said Heidi you got big buggers in your nose." She then said, "Sanford Jones, that is not a nice thing to say to me. You don't have to want to talk about this but if you are giving out cold pricklies, it is better during the rest of the day for you to come over to one of us teachers and talk about what you are feeling. It doesn't mean that your dad is a bad person but you can still like your dad and feel angry. It's okay for him to sleep, but you can still feel angry that you really didn't have time to talk on your visit and that you don't get a lot of visits and that you wait a long time for those visits."

A third and final example confirms the attention of staff to the individual student's feelings. At seven a.m. on a morning late in April, the director called me. Her voice was quivering and obviously full of sadness. Immediately I thought someone must have died. It was that kind of voice. "There has been a fire at the school" she told me. "The greenhouse room is gone, completely destroyed. I know you were coming to observe today, so I wanted to tell you."

"How did it happen" I asked. "They don't know. I heard about it late last night. They (the fire inspectors) think it might have been

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the janitor's cigarette left on the counter, but they don't know."

I told her how sorry I was. As soon as I got my own children off to the day care center, I rushed over to the school. I arrived to find the hallways blackened and wet. The smell of smoke was everywhere. The teachers as well as the director and other staff were in the office. Several had bloodshot eyes. They had obviously been crying. The walls of the office looked clean enough but the books and bookshelves had a layer of black soot on them.

The greenhouse room itself was gutted. There was nothing left except the blistered metal lockers and charred fire walls. The ceiling was gone. Just metal straps that had held the acoustic tile remained. The floor was heaped with ashen rubble. The wall of glass windows had been blown out by the heat. The intense fire had even broken the thick small window in the classroom door. And although the fire walls had contained the fire inside the greenhouse room, the heat through that small opening in the door had scorched the door and wall across the hallway.

One day after the fire, the insurance company hired a fire damage repair team to fix the class and school. They began by washing the entire school, including all the other smoke damaged classrooms. Most of the classrooms as well as the hallway required painting. In each of the other classrooms every toy and book had to be cleaned. Many books were lost to soot. Nothing in the greenhouse room survived. The repair work took nearly two weeks.

Two days after the fire, the teachers, the administrators, parents and volunteers began preparing a replacement class for the greenhouse room. An ice cream company executive offered to lend the school one of his trucks. Another local school gave supplies. Parents contributed toys. Insurance money covered six thousand dollars in lost materials. The teachers, administrators, parents, and volunteers began to repaint a second floor classroom. It would become, at least temporarily, the greenhouse room. The carpenter who had built the greenhouse constructed a new one, this time with curved windows.

A week later, the new class was ready and school reopened. I was there to observe. Elana was out for a minor operation on her ears. All of the other children were present. The room was bright pastel yellow with green trim, the same color as the original greenhouse. The new greenhouse would not be ready for a couple of weeks. While the new room did not have the jam packed quality of the room that had burned, it was never the less full. Within fifteen minutes of the kids arriving, four major monsters, Mario's specialty, adorned the blackboard. Jamie sat to the left on two pillows,playing with a plastic shaker toy. Margaret, his teacher, stood nearby. As I was observing, Heidi said to the director, "He loves that shaker so much. When he came in this morning I told him he had to put those beads together before he could use it. He slapped those beads together faster than you've ever seen." Heidi slapped her own fists together as she told the story.

Tommy was playing next to Shanara. Together they were cranking up a cassette movie machine that displayed a Sesame Street movie. It was a kind of elaborate movie master. Then Tommy took the movie machine and showed it to Mara and Kelly. A few minutes later he was at a play kitchen area pouring imaginary tea for the same two girls. Heidi leaned over to me and said, "Isn't this great."

Randy was playing with a toy cash register. Sara was checking out the books. And Peggy was wandering around putting her hands on the new toys and books. All of the children seemed curious about their new environment.

As I looked around, I noticed that the walls were filled with some of the same ideas that had been on the walls in the original classroom. There was a list of recommendations on how to get someone's attention. There was a place for posting news and a large area to pin up children's pictures. A big muppets poster covered the back side of a bookshelf that demarcated Jamie's one to one area. On another wall was a poster picture of a big hippopotamus with a person under it and the saying, "The Best Protection Is Love". Next to the door were plastic bins each marked with a child's name. Their metal lockers were across the hall this time, opposite the room.

On the first day back, several of the children brought flowers and plants for the teachers. One brought a bag of snacks for snack time.

After the children had a chance to explore the new territory, Heidi called them together for the morning meeting. Instead of checking off names and identifying the day of the week, she welcomed them back and said she wanted to ask them how they felt about losing the greenhouse room. Mara went first: "sad, I just feel sad about the greenhouse." Then Heidi said, "Yes, you liked to go up in the greenhouse didn't you?" "Yes, and I miss my blanket," Mara added.

When it got around to Tommy's turn, he said he felt okay seeing as how he had been able to get a new blanket, a purple one, which he had put in his new locker. "That's a great feeling to have something new," Heidi commented.

Sanford said he would miss the toys in the old room.

When it came time for Peggy to tell how she felt, Heidi asked, "Do you feel sad about the fire, Peggy?" Peggy smiled her impenetrable smile and said only "ya". Then she gazed around the room as Heidi asked further, "Do you miss some things?" Peggy answered, "Ya."

At that point, Diana chimed in saying, "I wish we had been watching the room. We could have kept it from having a fire." "We could have all been out there," Shanara concurred.

"Ya," Diana added. "We could have slept out there and guarded it. I would have brought my blanket and pillow."

"Well, I heard it was two boys that did it," Shanara volunteered. "There were two boys that did it."

Upon hearing this, Mario caused several kids and adults to laugh when he said, seriously, "I don't know who it was but it wasn't me."

Ricky said that he was saddest that he had lost his cowboy hat.

Heidi said that she had thought about that hat. "It was one of the first things I thought about, Ricky, because when I left the room on Thursday that was the last thing I picked up. I put it in your locker."

When Heidi asked Kelly how she felt, she remarked in her somewhat above it all manner, "I feel okay about it. I'm glad we have a new room. I was bored in the other room."

Heidi then asked aloud, "Class, do you think Kelly was unhappy in the greenhouse room?"

To a person, the class said aloud "No."

But then Heidi remarked, "Actually, Kelly's looking at it in a good way. There are new things here. New things to play with. New things to do. And that's sort of a good way to look at it."

Finally, Heidi asked Billy if he had seen the greenhouse room? He said "No" but that he had heard about the fire on the news. "It said there had been a fire at the Burlington School."

Just at that moment there was a loud noise in the back of the building. Several of the children jumped up and ran over to the window to see what was happening. A big truck had come to haul away a gargantuan tractor trailer sized dumpster that had in it literally the baked innards of the greenhouse room, including scorched lockers, broken glass, scorched fire door and heaps of unrecognizable rubble. Seeing this, Mario leaned against the window and began to weap uncontrollably. Heidi went to hug him and talk with him gently.

Peggy stood and watched, still with her full smile. Jamie remained over by his activity area with Margaret, looking around, almost as if he were oblivious to what was happening.

Heidi then suggested that maybe it would be a good idea for all of the kids to go down and have a look at the burned out greenhouse room. Mario said that he did not want to. So did Peggy. She, Mario and Jamie remained behind with Shana. The other children walked downstairs in a line and gathered around a makeshift plywood and blanketed doorway which marked the entrance to what had been the original greenhouse room. As Heidi pushed the blanket aside for the kids to peer in, we saw, together, a blackened room. A workman was sitting against the wall where the lockers had been, eating a sandwich. What had been a wall of windows was now a wall of plywood. As the children looked in, Diana broke down crying. Then Shanara began to cry. Next, Sanford cried.

The teachers worked at comforting children as we all headed back upstairs to the new classroom. Later that afternoon, I ran into Billy's mother. "How did Billy react," she asked me. I responded, "He seemed to accept it all."

"Well, his feelings will come out in another way at another time," she told me. "They'll probably come out at home in the next couple of days."

Two days later, at school, Billy asked his teachers if he could go down and look at the classroom again. They agreed. He went downstairs and stood there looking at the room, settling his feelings about it all.

Staffing: Individualization, close and frequent contact with families, integrated experiences, a fast moving pace of activities, the variety of activities, extensive attention to children with multiple needs, care that all children feel safe in the setting, and many other qualities of the classroom are possible because of the staffing in the setting. This classroom for thirteen children has a minimum of three teachers---often there are five---most of the time. In addition, a language resource teacher works on getting children to verbalize, to speak appropriately, to learn concepts, to learn alternative means of communication through symbols and signing, to help develop the communication part of the individualized education plans for children with disabilities, and to consult with the classroom teachers on all of the above. Also, the staffing includes a parent worker whose responsibility it is to observe in the class, participate in staff meetings, and then meet regularly with the parents of the labeled children to help train them to carry forth curricular and treatment strategies that are consistent with the ones being used at school. Also, each class has a support staff person who supervises students in the class and who is a consultant to the team of teachers.

One of the implications of this staffing pattern is the obvious need for enormous attention to structuring or orchestrating the sequence of events in staff utilization. The head teacher described her role as, in part, orchestrator. The support teacher told me that at the beginning of each school year the staff spend at least two full days working out scheduling. The end product is that staff do seem to have internalized a complex schedule. The classroom teachers know just when the resource teacher will be calling a particular child out of the class. This is coordinated with a similar event (e.g. reading or language arts) in the classroom so that the child does not miss another type of opportunity such as a class meeting or social event in which he or she may socialize with non-disabled children.

The unique staffing makes possible several other things as well. The school has no special classes or what are often called self-contained special classes. There are four classrooms, each with twelve to thirteen children and each with an integrated grouping of four labeled and eight or nine non-labeled children. There are no self contained (i.e. separate) special classes for the disabled only. Both because the creators of this school do not want segregated programs and because the school utilizes a level of staffing which permits one to one and small grouping, and thus a high degree of individualization. This in turn presents another interesting phenomenon.

People usually defend self contained special classes and other forms of segregation (i.e. institutionalization, separate schools for the disabled only) on the grounds that segregation makes possible a unique level of intensive programming. The open setting, through its liberal staffing and high individualization, breaks this pattern. It makes possible extraordinary intensity of programming in an integrated setting.

One might argue that such staffing can be achieved only at a prohibitive cost, though it seems quite obvious that when compared with the current cost of institutionalization (twenty five thousand dollars-one hundred thousand dollars per year per resident) for disabled children such as those who attend the open setting, this is clearly not so. The fact of the matter is that the open setting achieves its staffing through a relatively low cost group of strategies: (a) being allowed to a University training program which can provide masters level students in special education, school psychology, and special education administration interns, (b) by encouraging volunteer involvement, (c) by developing shared staffing agreements with the State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, (d) by modest tuition for the non-disabled children, and (e) by extensive parent involvement.

Consumer Power/Parents: Parents have an unparalleled role at the Open School. Parents serve on the board. Indeed apart from three administrators on the board, nearly all of the other board members are parents. Ten to twelve parents attend each board meeting. And all parents are invited to attend board meetings. Parents always serve on hiring committees. A few parents work at the school in lieu of paying part or all of the tuition. Some assist in the rather usual ways of playing musical instruments in the classrooms, sharing other skills, and driving their cars for field trips. And parents assist in fund raising activities (most funding comes from tuition paid by cooperating school districts for each child placed; shared staffing from the State Office of Mental Retardation (four teacher positions); a shared staffing from the local University in the form of masters level students who receive stipends and free tuition through government grants; and parent paid tuition).

In addition there are three formal parent groups at the school. A general parent group, or rather a series of parent activities, for all the parents is one such group. The events include social gatherings such as a square dance or Christmas party as well as educational forms (e.g. a film, speaker). A second type of parent group is the one for parents of labeled or "special" children. The director describes this groups activities as including common sharing of strategies about how to help a child sleep at night, about how to get a child to stop engaging in tantrums, about how to get a child to diversify his or her diet (some eat one thing and one thing only), about how to eat properly or appropriately (one child was eating with a fork and spoon at school but with his hands at home), about language development, and about other behavioral and skill needs. The school staff provide child care during these once a month meetings. Basically the group is a self help organization. Occasionally, an outside speaker will be brought in, but often one of the parents will make a presentation on a pre-arranged topic; the other parents will then discuss that presentation. The staff view this group as essential to their overall effort to educate children because the group provides a forum in which parents can begin to analyze their children's needs more effectively, learn skills to work with their children and derive support from other parents throughout. Here is how the director described these goals:

> "With a lot of the kids, I think it is true with any kids, but I think particularly with perhaps special kids, parents get really caught up in not wanting to go through the short term battles for the long term gains. One example would be working through a kid screaming because he didn't want to go to bed and not being willing to go through the three nights of screaming in order to get the kid to the point where the

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> kid would go to bed.
>
> We have a couple of families whose kids just weren't sleeping at night. The kids were getting up and walking around the house destroying things. The parents weren't sleeping. It really becomes a question of would they close the door and not let the kid out of the room and go through the screaming, the kid taking apart the room in order to try to get the kid to learn to stay. I think the parents have made so many compromises because of the sort of degree of their kids' disability that a lot of times it is really hard to do what you have to do to see some progress. So you give in to the kids rigidity. You give in. We have a kid whose mother for years every day, rain, sleet, or snow, followed the kid on an hour long walk in the fields in their backyard in exactly the same path, on exactly the same schedule. He did it and he would tantrum enormously if she varied from the schedule in any way. He also was used to being fed at four o'clock when he got home from school. When our parent worker approached the family about the possibility of him learning to eat with the family and have dinner with the family, the mother just panicked because she could not imagine that she could handle how upset he would be to have to gradually extend the time. You would have had to do it over a period of time. She would have had to feed him alone later and later until she got to the point where he was then going to eat at the regular dinner hour and at the table with everyone else. They would have had to tolerate how difficult he is at the table and his eating habits and they would have had to handle changing their patterns too. It was a toss up of what the gains are with something like that. They ended up not doing it. He still eats at four thirty in the afternoon, three years later. But he now eats with utensils. I think what our parent workers see themselves doing is finding out a lot about strategies parents are using at home so we can be consistent at school. Also, trying to push things a little farther to help parents to take some risks and use the support of our staff to help them to try some of those kinds of things at home.

The third parent group is for single parents. Fifty two percent of the children at the school come from single parent or divorced families. This group of single parents meets twice a month. A staff person serves as a facilitator. Essentially, the parents provide support to each other by discussing mutual problems and solutions.

In addition to these strategies of consumer involvement, the school has adopted several other strategies. Each child has a little notebook. These notebooks go back and forth between teachers and parents in the children's lunchboxes. The teachers can write notes about progress or events, as are the parents. It provides a sporadic way of maintaining informal communication between school and home. Then, of course, the parents and teachers have regular parent/teacher conferences to discuss child progress. Parents are also encouraged to spend time in the classroom looking at the materials, books, and schedules.

What makes parent involvement so markedly different in this setting as opposed to other school settings is its prominence, both internally to the classroom and school operation, and externally in the community. On the latter score, it should be noted that parent meetings have included major community events attended by parents, staff and leaders of community human service agencies, including numerous school districts. For example, the school has sponsored such nationally prominent lecturers as Clara Claiborne Park, a parent of a child with autism and the author of the important book The Siege, Dr. Woods, the creator of the curriculum entitled Developmental Therapy, and others. The school also sponsored the premiere showing of an educational film about the open setting, entitled more than hugs and kisses. Other community events of note in which parents and staff participated, but for which they did not have sole responsibility, have included presentations by adolescent siblings of disabled children about what it is like to be a sibling, first hand accounts by disabled youths about what it is like to be a disabled youth, training in educational rights (i.e. how to win a due process hearing) and so forth. It is also note worthy that several parents at the school have teamed with staff to make presentations at the conventions of the National Autistic Society and other such professional and consumer gatherings.

Making Integration Work: Perhaps most atypical of all the school's qualities is the prominence given to integration. It almost seems that the school exists to integrate. Perhaps it does.

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Integration means many things in this setting. It means having disabled and non-disabled children in the same room; it means structuring classroom events so that the labeled children are never identified as a distinct, related group (i.e. I never saw the four labeled children grouped together); it means facilitating communication between disabled and non-disabled children; it means being watchful and conscious about the language one uses in the setting (i.e. never calling a child handicapped, autistic, profoundly retarded, or "our spina bifida child"); it means paying as much attention to insuring that a child with a severe disability appears appropriately dressed, as clean as other children, and appropriately groomed; it means encouraging open discussion of personal qualities and needs (i.e. answering children's questions about disabilities); it means expressing caring for all children; and it means ensuring that the staff includes some people with disabilities. These qualities seemed ever present at the open setting.

The focus on integration surfaced constantly. With Jamie, for example, separation would have seemed more practical at times, yet the benefits of integration were obvious. When the children sat down for a snack, Jamie might reach out for another child's cracker. So one teacher always sat or stood near Jamie. The result was that over the course of several months, he learned, with few exceptions to eat only his own food. Also, meal times and snack times provided an opportunity to teach Jamie how to communicate with sign language. He was required to use a sign for food or drink before receiving these. He accomplished the tasks.

Gym activities also lent themselves to the task of integration for the children with the most severe disabilities. Again, an example involving Jamie will demonstrate the point. "I feel such delight" the support staff person told me. "When I see the other kids valuing him. They really care for the integrated experience.

Take for example teaching him some skill like passing a ball. They will practice teaching Jamie how to pass a ball. Then they'll try it in a group. And they really feel good when he does it." Over time these efforts make it possible for Jamie, usually with a teacher's assistance, to participate in group activities.

It is obvious that the teachers try to measure success in terms of integration and what professionals in the field call "normalization" (providing services in a manner which maximizes the individual's ability to live a normal life in typical social situations.) Take for example Jamie's experience. As one of the staff noted, Jamie entered the school with the same facial expressions which are rather typical for profoundly mentally retarded persons. "He looked like a child who would usually be put in a segregated class. His mouth was open; his head would hang; his eyes would be down or wandering. But now, he really looks in people's eyes a lot. He's focusing." When the class celebrated Jamie's birthday, he smiled when a classmate said "Happy Birthday". And he clapped his hands when the teacher congratulated him. While at the school he became nearly flawless in learning to use the toilet. All of these gains in appearance in basic living skills contributed to the goal of normalization. Interestingly, the search for ways to pursue what seemed like an integration imperative were on going. One day, one of the teachers suggested that the process of Jamie getting off the bus could be improved:

> Sally: "I did want to talk about Jamie's getting off the bus. Don't you think that we could have him get his boots off himself and also maybe we could leave that harness that he wears on the bus."
>
> Margaret: "Yes I think that would be a good idea because then he wouldn't or the other kids wouldn't keep asking why he's wearing it. Why don't we try and see if we can leave the harness and then the other kids won't question him about it." Everyone nodded.
>
> Jim: "I was visiting a school the other day and this autistic kid had his harness on all day long and the teachers thought

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[illegible] with leaving [illegible] on all day." Several of the teachers in the meeting [illegible] and one said, "Oh [illegible]." Sally: "Maybe he should unhook it himself."

Margaret pointed out that it zippered in the back.

Heidi: "Oh, he can do that."

At the beginning of each day, all the children in the class sit around in a circle. The teacher asks one of the children to tell what month it is. Another tells the day of the month. And another still the day of the week. Then each child is asked to come up and write (or check off if he or she cannot write) his or her name on a chart. Also, each child is asked to share an experience or hope in a line or two. This is called "news of the day". The teacher writes down the news. For James, who does not talk, the teachers learned from the group home staff or from his parents what he has done over the weekend. This has been volunteered by the teacher and written down with the other children's comments. When school began, Jamie did not know how to go up to the chart, a teacher had to help him each step of the way. But one day he learned how:

There was a class meeting going on and Jamie was part of the meeting but with teacher restraint, having his back rubbed and having physical cues, being helped back down to his chair, having his back rubbed, having his head stroked so that he would remain in his chair during the class meeting. And the lead teacher in the room asked Jamie to come up and check off his name. The lead teacher is Heidi. He can do that. When he crossed the room, he walked across the circle to the pad that Heidi was holding and she gave him a magic marker so he could make a mark on the paper next to his name. As he walked across the circle, his arms and legs were going in different directions and he was jumping around and we were kind of wondering if he was actually going to make it or if he was going to bolt out of the circle. At that point in the year, if Jamie were going to bolt out of the circle, he would probably run around and knock things down. He was easily excitable. I watched one of the children in the class just looking and grinning at Jamie and she exclaimed 'Look at Jamie, he is really feeling good today'. Instead of laughing or saying 'what is he doing' or being shocked by his arms and legs and playing with his hair, the kids watched with interest. He was really an active body crossing that circle. And he made it. He checked off his name.

Later in the school year, the children had a visitor to this early morning session of news sharing. Her name was Corin. She was a student in the Children's Fundamental Learning Program (CFLP), a special class for profoundly multiply handicapped children operated in the Burlington school building by the State Office of Mental Retardation. She sat in a wheelchair, her body stiffly contorted and her head hanging to the left. While Mary, one of the nondisabled children, was reporting about her visit to her uncle's home, Billy got up, crossed the room, and put his hand on Corin's plastic brace which covered her stomach. The teacher aide interrupted Mary's news giving and said "Oh, you wanted to feel Corin's brace. She has that so her spine won't curve. It helps her keep her body straight. That's a really helpful thing for Corin to be wearing." Then Billy looked at it a bit more and returned to his seat. After a few more minutes it got around to Corin's turn to share news. Since she could not talk, Heidi wrote a few notes on a piece of paper and asked one of the student teachers to read it: "We have some news from Corin. It's her turn. Corin went shopping for groceries and she got some new clothes yesterday." The teachers were doing with Corin what they did with each child, finding a way to fit her into the group. When it came time for her to return to her room, Heidi asked who would like to take her back. Six hands shot up. She chose Noel for the task. The teacher strapped Corin into the wheelchair and off they went, Noel pushing Corin.

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Dimensions of Integration

Ideological

Purpose of the school is to promote social integration.

Pedagogical

Teach acceptance of difference as part of a curriculum.

Teach about disabilities as part of curriculum. Include teaching about aides and prostheses present in setting.

Provide proximity of children with and without disabilities to each other by grouping four labeled and eight to nine non-labeled children in a classroom.

Never group children with disabilities together.

Integrate children with disabilities whenever possible, according to individual ability and academic activities such as reading, math, choices, science, etc.

Integrate children for gym, playground, group meeting, lunch, snack, art, rest time.

Integrate children for field trips, visits to neighborhood stores, libraries, and other community resources.

Place labeled children in helping in other "leader" roles whenever possible.

Teach alternative communication (signing) to all students.

Utilize special education and non-special education staff. The staff are as a whole truly multi disciplinary.

Teach behaviors which will maximize success of child in next integrated environment.

Avoid special jargon including using labeling.

Minimize use of unnatural teaching methods which might emphasize special populations (e.g. over behavior modification language).

Group children by chronological, not developmental, age.

Allow time and activities such as "choices" for natural student initiated integrative interactions.

Include functional activities such as cooking, cleanup, growing plants as part of curriculum for all children.

Identify and constantly reassess goals and strategies for all children in the setting, always oriented toward further growth.

Use staff meetings to discuss ways of promoting improved integration [illegible] Con't.

as well as individual academic and social development.

Never use punitive measures such as physical restraints, isolation, or drugs.

Develop a daily schedule that maximizes interaction between labeled and non-labeled children.

Include social and emotional growth as part of regular curriculum which also includes academic and physical education.

Teachers keep notes on children's development including integrative experiences.

Use activities such as class meeting, singing, art, choices, gym, and birthday parties to create a sense of community, of group belonging.

Deal with anti social behaviors such as hitting or hair pulling by promoting other socially accepted behaviors.

Provide structured opportunities for staff development (in-service) on both teaching academics skills and integration.

Encourage social integration through family involvement and school wide social groups.

Sell integration as a model of education by engaging in program development in public schools of numerous school districts.

A School As A Social Mission

As with so many particularly "good" or obviously "successful" programs where one finds general acclaim for child progress achieved and wide spread satisfaction with a sense of community which pervades the program, there is a driving force at work in the open setting. Some settings seem to be driven by the charisma of one individual. That was not the case in this instance. While there are a number of strong, energetic people involved, no one ever suggested to me, nor were there signs of it, that the place could be characterized as a product of charisma. Nor did some of the other usual explanations hold. The enthusiasm and excitement of the setting were not understandable simply in terms of the rich staffing, the University ties, or the level of family involvement. All of these factors surely contributed to the esprit of the setting but none seemed to truly explain it. Nor could one say that this was an organization enjoying the usual honeymoon of a new, young enterprise. After all, it had been around for more than five years, the point at which most new enterprises collapse. Rather, one has to look for another explanation, in this case an ideological or social mission.

If you want to understand the Open School, you need to comprehend the faculty and administrators commitment to the goal of integration, not only for children with disabilities, but for all disabled people, they believed in integration for the American school as well as for the American society.

Integration was the centerpiece of the school. It exists to integrate. The population of children suggests the objective, one third children with disabilities, two thirds typical children, all integrated, with no special classes. The teachers strategies for programming also stress integration. One never observed the groups of children with disabilities singled out, segregated. Administratively,

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teachers were never identified as the special teachers and the regular teachers. Such differentiation did not exist. The only "special" activities (e.g. individual education plans; a special parent group; and special placement efforts in public schools for labeled children about to leave the open setting) that might suggest differential focus on children with disabilities were unobtrusive in the day to day functioning of the school.

But the school possessed more than a few signs that integration was working. The belief in integration became a social mission. For example, note the reaction of the open setting staff to other school programs within the building. A pre-school program for children with retardation shared part of the Burlington school building along with a Head Start office, a fundamental learning program for severely and profoundly retarded youngsters, and a day care center. The open setting staff felt particularly critical of the pre-school program for being segregated:

> "Boy, I was going down the hall and there were these four really cute kids and one of them you couldn't tell that this kid had any disability at all. It is really hard to figure out why those kids are all together."
> teacher aide

> "These kids with downs syndrome are incredibly capable. There is no reason for them to be in a separate class. Compared to some of our kids, they have so much more going for them."
> teacher

The open school staff and officials seem perturbed that other human service agencies and educational professionals were not as committed and enthusiastic as they were with integration. Take another example, this case the director's reaction to a visiting state education official who had come to the school to evaluate whether or not the school should receive permanent certification:

> The director paraphrased the official's remarks saying,"'Why are you doing this. You are making it so hard for yourselves. Why are you trying to do all this integration. Why are you mixing these normal kids with these disabled kids. It would be so much easier if you just had disabled kids. I don't know how to evaluate this program. I mean maybe this should just be a regular education division. Maybe it should be in special education. I just don't know.'" The director found these comments nearly insufferable. "We have been trying to be so patient, trying to get through the morning. Finally, I think he is done now. I mean this guy is unbelievable."

The staff frequently shared their sense of frustration with what they perceived as a lack of commitment from other professionals to their mission of maximizing child development by promoting normalization. They were nearly dumbfounded when a social worker from a private community agency suggested that she could not work with or even meet a disabled student's brothers and sisters because her work day finished at four thirty sharp. They were frustrated when the staff at a group home would not carry over one of the children's programs from the school to the residential setting by practicing those activities in the evening. Here is what they had to say on that score:

> Margaret: "I mean it is really discouraging if they can't do any follow up with him."
>
> Language Specialist: "They don't think he enjoys. They say he doesn't enjoy playing with toys."
>
> Margaret: "Just because you have to structure it for him, doesn't mean he doesn't enjoy it."
>
> Language Specialist: "By the time he enjoys toys, he will be too old to play with toys."
>
> Mary: "He has got to be involved so that when he is twenty one he can be somewhat productive."
>
> Heidi: "Well they, meaning the group home staff, told me that 'we've got lots of kids who are more important than Jamie here.'"

They were generally saddened when Jamie showed up one day with a choppy bowl hair cut of the sort one often sees among institutionalized children. In their minds, such a hair cut worked against their

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goal of integration, but as much as possible socially. And it was a sign that he had not been taken to a professional barber. This bothered them because they knew him to be capable of going to a barber.

And, integration was not just a badge to be worn, a symbol of the difference between the open setting and other people or practices. It was a belief, something to be sold, exported to others. Indeed, the school has a "long range planning committee" made up of staff and parents. The director spoke of its purpose:

> "We just had a meeting with representatives from thirteen or fourteen different school districts. Talking about what are your programs now, what are your needs. These are the children from here that will be returning to your district; what are the options you have for them? We are trying to get people talking to each other."

Some models of the open setting approach to integration are already in place as a result of this selling effort. "The Jack Matthews (a school) model is a direct result (of selling integration). Six children, our older children, are now in integrated classes at Jack Matthews (the community elementary school). And now, some tentative reaching out is being made in East Cedarsburg. We have several children for East Cedarsburg and that is one district that has expressed a strong interest in developing an integrated program.

It was not unusual to hear staff talking animatedly about successful integration going on in small pockets of school districts, usually in a single class somewhere as a result of a dedicated teacher with little support. They were quite ready to recognize that it was often harder to integrate children in regular public schools if the staffing ratios were not as favorable and if the supportive environment was missing. Yet even in the face of the less than ideal conditions, they still hoped and pressed for integration, particularly for the labeled children leaving their classes to go to public schools.

The teachers talked a lot about what program Jamie would enter.

They wondered if he would succeed. "It is [illegible] dependent," Margaret warned, "somebody has to want him." The teachers discussed the need to be sure Jamie could get his coat on and off and that he knew how to sit at a desk for long periods of time, two behaviors that would be essential to his succeeding in a special class in the public schools. They desperately wanted it to work for Jamie. The language specialist at the open setting visited Jamie's perspective class and reported back to the greenhouse room, about what it was like and how the staff would have to prepare him (see above). When they discussed Jamie's perspective placement, Margaret concluded the discussion by saying "If we know who the teacher is and where the program is, I will give them reports. I'll give them teaching demonstrations. I'll do whatever it takes to make it work."

The teachers felt a similar level of concern for Billy's future integration. Their concern surfaced toward the end of the school year. He was "flying" in his reading, according to Heidi. He was ready for a regular class, perhaps with some resource help. They just hoped the teachers in his new setting would understand him as a person. Heidi summed it up this way:

> "I just hope that they'll see him for what he is and see that he is such an unusual guy. I just hope they don't see him as scary. If he is scared of them, he will get nervous. I just wonder about their expectations. It is really hard to tell. He likes structure. But boy, he has such a good sense of humor. I just hope they appreciate him because he will do so well. I wouldn't be surprised if in a year or two he doesn't need any support services at all."

In the final analysis, the teachers were nervous. They desperately wanted the labeled children to get ahead. And to them,"getting ahead" meant continuing integration in the next setting, in the public schools.

The teachers' concern for integration was clearly wrapped up in their affection and belief in the children with whom they had worked. They believed that what they were providing was the best possible approach to education. They worried that society wouldn't catch on fast enough to their discovery of the beauty of integration. An incident on the last day of school exemplified this sense of urgency.

> Shana sitting on a bench. I walked over toward her, and as I did, she got up and walked over to Jamie and helped him get his ball. Jamie was playing in the yard near several other children. Shana walked over and sat down next to me. "You know it wouldn't be so hard if I didn't know that these have probably been the best years of his life. It will never be this good again." As she said it, tears came to her eyes. She began to weep. I tried to console her, "boy, I know it must be so hard for you to see Jamie leave the school and not know what it is going to be like for him." "Well," Shana said, "I went over to the institution and saw this other girl over there and that other girl could be Jamie. This is a girl that they made this secure unit for. It's a locked unit just for her. That's where Jamie could be. That is what Jamie could be like, like her. It makes you feel so bad."

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Postscript

It is often said, at least in educational circles, that a child's diagnosis more often originates with a psychologist's preference (e.g. the LD specialist sees a learning disability in nearly every child), with funding patterns (i.e. send the child to whatever programs are being funded this year), or with other social or organizational factors than with a neutral view of the child's needs. Indeed, it is quite clear that there never has been, nor could there ever be a truly neutral or objective analysis of a child's needs. The place of children, the definition of their needs, and the human services which respond to those needs all develop through complex and interactional processes between children and society.

The same can be said of research. The researcher does not and could not capture a neutral or objective picture of a setting or of the complex occurrences in a setting. So many factors shape the interaction of researcher and setting. The researcher comes with a past history, with a personality, with a particular set of expectations, and so forth. Likewise, the setting possesses a history, a way of responding to outsiders, a language of its own, and other qualities which influence the research outcome. Perhaps most important, the researcher brings a research method. And the method itself strongly influences "the product". In part, researchers try to account for this inevitable "influence" by giving careful attention to research design. They speak of guarding against "contaminating" the data. Yet the fact of the matter is that even if researchers can avoid intruding on the data, in this case a complex social setting, the method they choose clearly colors the kind of picture they are able to draw from their target (i.e. subjects, setting, demographic information, etc.).

It has always seemed to me that the qualitative research approach has a certain built in potential to yield a particular type of picture. On the one hand, one expects a picture rich in detail, attuned to complex interactions, and personal (never alienated). On the other hand, whatever the level of complexity, one more or less expects to find discrepancies between official definitions (indeed qualitative researchers have a name for official stories; they call them cover stories) of an organization's purpose and actions and its "real" or unofficial story. Thus, the qualitative study often reads like an expose of our prevailing myths. We learn, for example, that schools are sometimes more like factories than schools (Rist,), that job training programs are sometimes more like modern day ways of getting people to sing for their supper (Bogdan,), that survey data collectors occasionally create their data ( ), and that agencies serving the blind hide from the public the fact that two thirds of all blind people are elderly (Scott,). Not surprisingly this same method which seems to have a pension for exploding myths has an almost unfailing ability to humanize and empathize with oppressed groups or those sociologists refer to as "deviants". One might say that the myths about such people---they are nothing more than stereotypes---dissolve under close, qualitative scrutiny.

Interestingly, this case study did not follow that pattern. No expose emerged. The "official line" (that children with disabilities achieve integration, that all children are valued, that integration can work) never diverged from the observed "reality". Official ideology and unofficial day to day actions were synononous. Unlike so many school situations where mainstreaming is an issue, a focus of debate, here there was no debate. Of course there were difficulties, conflicts, and doubts about any number of things but not about the matter of mainstreaming. The setting was indeed complex and not immediately easy to understand, but one did not sense any kind of discrepancy between purpose and action. The guiding question for staff, administrators, and parents was never "is mainstreaming a good idea?" Rather, the guiding questions were "how is it working?" and "how can we make it work better?"

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CHAPTER 4

"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE KIND OF TEACHER WHO DID THINGS I BELIEVED IN WHETHER OTHER PEOPLE DID THEM OR NOT": AN INTEGRATED KINDERGARTEN

Ellen Barnes

The power of an individual to create a unique program is seldom acknowledged in educational systems studies. Lynn is a regular class teacher who has, through her own interests and drive with the strong support of the district's special education director, developed an exciting mainstreaming program. What happens in her classroom has not been a function of district-wide policy, of principal mandate, or of parental demand. It was created because a single teacher with a strong interest in children with special needs wanted to teach them in her class. The director of special education shared the belief that special children with significant disabilities can be served well in regular classrooms and has been willing to be an active resource and support to regular teachers willing to try.

The Teacher

Lynn has been teaching kindergarten in the same classroom in the same school for seventeen years. Prior to her arrival in the Parkerville School District in a suburb of Central City, when she was just out of college, she worked briefly in a residential setting for emotionally disturbed children. Other than that one year stint, her professional life has revolved around the large room at the end of the hall in McKenzie school and the children who each year pass through its doors.

Lynn's interest in children with special needs began with a course audited in her senior year in college. After she began teaching, she took courses each summer in special education. At one point, she was offered a job in special ed in another district, but felt she wasn't qualified and was committed to Parkerville.

Also:

> It was also then that I somehow knew I didn't want special ed exclusive of typical kids. I needed the range.

While many people who go into special education have experiences with a disabled family member, Lynn only describes a retarded cousin who lived out West and with whom she had little contact. Lynn remembers one formative experience during her student teaching:

> I student taught in the first grade with a teacher who I believe probably had had a stroke and was partially paralyzed. There was something very special about her classroom that I never really understood how it got the way it was. But kids managed to bring her things because she could get around but was really limited in the speed and amount of walking she could do... I never got a sense that the kids were waiting on her. It was always that there were jobs to do.

Lynn's description of the significant aspect of this experience - the social environment - reflects a major emphasis in her own classroom which will be described later.

Lynn continued to take courses and attend conferences and inservice in special education topics, particularly learning disabilities. This continual effort at expanding her own knowledge is an aspect of Lynn that contributes to her skill as a teacher. During these years she had contact with Bernice Bates, first in Bernice's role as a district wide resource teacher and later in her administrative position as supervisor of special education. This contact included courses that Bernice taught within the district. In 1977 Bernice was seeking a part time kindergarten experience for a child with cerebral palsy who's primary placement would be in a class for educable mentally retarded pupils in McKenzie School. She brought Sandy and her mother in to meet Lynn and they agreed to have Sandy spend afternoons with

Lynn and mornings in her special class setting.

The following school year Lynn had two students identified as handicapped and through Bernice was paid during the summer to work and develop the program. One of the children was quite physically handicapped with additional behavioral difficulties. Lynn spent time with the child in the school to figure out what adaptations were needed to meet her physical needs and also worked at the cerebral palsy clinic where Pat had been enrolled, learning about testing and therapy. In preparation for the 1979-80 year, Lynn had talked with Bernice about Peggy and Patty.

> I was aware of them a couple of years ago. They are right in this area. Peggy's grandmother was next door and I had heard about Peggy from the time she was very young. About two years ago, I took Mary, my landlady, out to lunch and Mary, the grandmother, went with us. I remember her showing me a picture of Peggy then. I can remember saying to her that certainly there were kids that were as involved as she was who were in public school... What was sticking in the back of my mind was I hope I never told the grandmother I hoped it would be me because it's possible that you have a kid so involved that she needs to be in a special class.

Bernice and Lynn planned and after a number of negotiations, Peggy and Patty began part time in November.

At the time of this research (February-June, 1980) there were a total of six children in Lynn's classes who were labeled as handicapped. How these children were placed will be described later.

Lynn's appearance correlates with her work demands and her expressive personality. In her late thirties, Lynn has short hair, bright eyes, an easy smile, and active hands that punctuate her speech. She dresses professionally and practically, often slacks and tops and flat shoes, appropriate to her constant movement in the classroom, her sitting on the floor with children, and the sensory materials (water, sand, paint) used each day. Five feet, six inches or so and of average build, her presence seems to dominate the classroom even when everyone is busily engaged in independent activity, perhaps because most of the people are five years old and short! She seems to have eyes on all sides of her since her ability to scan the room and be aware of twenty children at once is phenomenal. While she often is quiet and lets children take the lead in what they are doing, the feeling that eminates from her is of constant alertness and internal activity, able to be expressed at any second in a child's name being called, a suggestion given, a command to redirect some interaction, a quiet gesture to a child or the classroom aide. (She seems to use non-verbal cues as often as verbal ones.) The overall impression is of a person completely at home in her space, in command of her environment, and enjoying what she's doing.

The School

McKenzie School is located on a hill in Parkersville. It is easy to imagine that twenty years ago this area was farmland, without the East-West highway that slices through it and without the low-income housing tracts between isolated farmhouses. Built in 1962 of sturdy cement, the school has a current enrollment of five hundred and fifty children. The principal Bill McPeak, describes the student body as reflecting two major population centers, Mohawk Farms ("low cost boxes, tract housing where you can still buy a small house for $24,000") and Sarison, a planned community. The people in Mohawk Farms, he says are "angry people" like the people he knew when he worked in an inner-city school.

> "They are people on their way up. They work 9 to 5, get paid an hourly rate, hate their bosses and turn off the work when they walk out the door and go home at the end of the day."

He perceives them as having suffered failure in school and expresses general anger at the system. Sarison, according to McPeak, has "two classes of people, the renters who are subsidized and the owners." The forty children from Sarison whose families rent represent most of the kids he spends his time with, meaning children who get into trouble.

The school population is about 98% caucasian but the principal hastened to say that what the school was and what the general public thought were two different things.

> People think we're a suburb, but we're not that. We're unique. People think a suburb means the elite.

The school is a U with two wings of classrooms and a central unit of offices and the auditorium. The building is not architecturally accessible. Inside the front door is the usual sign commanding all visitors to report to the principal's office. With five hundred and fifty children, McKenzie has thirty three staff, with class sizes ranging from twenty to thirty depending on the grade level of the children. The principal described the school as "full but not bursting at the seams." There are two special ed classes labeled educable mentally handicapped and a resource program. He requires special ed children to be mainstreamed into "the specials", i.e., music, art, gym. However, they are integrated into academic classes only if the teacher can negotiate it with another teacher. In addition to the children designated as handicapped, there are one hundred children in the building designated as PSEN, Pupils with Special Educational Needs. These are children who scored at least two years below grade level on a reading or math levels test and are eligible for remedial instruction.

The Classroom

The kindergarten classroom is located at the far end of the primary wing. Outside her room, there are storage shelves, floor to ceiling, filled with materials (she had built). There are also small table and chairs, child size, set up in the hall and adaptive equipment such as a prone board and a wheelchair there. A window beside the door allows you to see into the room.

The room is set up in activity centers defined by furniture, materials, and signs. These include sensory area (water and sand and art) near a sink, block corner, with trucks, housekeeping corner (dressup clothes and toy kitchen furniture), listening center (record player, filmstrip projector and headphones) and book corner with a large cardboard playhouse. There are a number of tables large and small, of different shapes, where children can sit and work alone or in small groups. The center of the room is a large open space with a rug for play and group meetings. Storage lines the walls, including cubbies for each child and shelves and boxes filled with learning and art materials, all categorized and labeled (e.g., "beads", "math games"). The impression is one of a wealth of materials and effective use of space. (When I found out Lynn had been teaching in this same room for seventeen years, it was more understandable that she has developed these rich material resources and efficient organization. The room is like her home.) A teacher's desk piled high with papers, books and games sits unobtrusively against the window wall; next to it a piano. There's a child-size bathroom near the door. A large easel stands near the edge of the rug with chart paper for the daily experience story and under it a large communication board for Peggy with symbols and pictures and words on it. Any wall space (including blackboards) that is not filled with storage, is covered with children's art work.

The Children

There are two sessions of kindergarten, 9-11:30 p.m. and 1-3:30 p.m.. Lynn has 21 children in her morning class and 18 in her afternoon class. The typical children were all five years old and white except one boy. From their dress they seemed of diverse economic backgrounds. There are four morning children labeled handicapped: Peggy and Patty who each attend two to three mornings a week and Mark and Bobby (entered in April) who are there five days a week. In the afternoon are Danny and Katie, (five days a week). Peggy is five years old and has cerebral palsy. She is very small and attractive. She has no speech and uses a language board to communicate; the board has on it both pictures of people, objects and activities, and Bliss symbols, a system in which a symbol for a concept is paired with the printed word. The language board usually goes with Peggy wherever she is, on a tray in front of her. Lynn also has made a five foot replica of the language board which is propped on an easel in the classroom; Peggy uses a light beam (attached to her head) to point to the large board and thereby talk to all the children in the group at once. (This "headlight" was constructed by Lynn from an automobile mechanics light when it became clear that itmight be months before the one she requested from the cerebral palsy clinic would arrive.) Peggy has become increasingly assertive about her needs, initiating more and Lynn seems to be able to decode her efforts though it is frustrating for other adults and children. In fact, the process of facilitating Peggy's communication with other children is a constant focus of Lynn's energy. Peggy's physical rigidity means an adult's help is required to move her; she sets in either a wheelchair (though she can't push it herself) in a padded insert placed on the floor or in other chairs with arms, in the classroom. Her fine motor control is very limited but she is able to point (sometimes inexactly) to the appropriate squares on the language board. Peggy returns to the cerebral palsy clinic each day for therapy and Lynn is interested in increasing her time in public school to full time. She feels Peggy is functioning at kindergarten level in terms of her cognitive skills.

Patty also has cerebral palsy and spends the rest of her days at the Cerebral Palsy Clinic. In a wheelchair most of the time, Patty can crawl and move herself around. She also has very understandable speech and can make her needs known. In fact, Lynn considers this attractive, well-dressed little girl as somewhat manipulative, using her social skills and charm to get out of doing things expected of her and to get attention. One of her goals for Patty is "to learn to use other people in more appropriate ways." While Patty also seems to be age appropriate in terms of her cognitive skills, Lynn feels she is less like a five year old than Peggy in terms of her social needs, though as she has more time with typical children this seems to be coming along. Patty lives with her grandmother and sees her mother regularly; her mother has a new baby and Lynn speculated that it might be stressful for Patty knowing the baby was with her mother all the time. Patty had surgery in the spring and was out of school for a number of weeks.

Mark, large, typical looking, is having his second year in Lynn's class. He appears to have specific learning problems and is incredibly active when not on ritalin. Lynn has been giving him individualized instruction and helping him focus and attend better. He goes to the speech therapist as well. She feels he couldn't function in a regular class next year without resource help.

Bobby entered the kindergarten class in late April. He is labeled emotionally disturbed. He is small and frail with a pale complexion and heavy congestion. Lynn described the family as having multiple problems, including physical disabilities, and Bobby apparently has a heart problem for which surgery may be required. He was removed from another kindergarten because of his behavior, which the teacher could not manage. He seems to be impulsive, easily upset, lacking self-control. Lynn's efforts have been geared toward talking with him about his behavior and building a relationship with him so he will respond to her requests, instructions, limits. Lynn's aide, Judy seemed even more necessary in the morning class after Bobby entered; she helped not only with physical demands of lifting and moving and positioning Peggy and Patty but she also was able to take over the class direction when Lynn needed to help Bobby through one of his tantrums.

There are three labeled children in the afternoon kindergarten: Danny, Katie and Michael. Danny is considered severely language delayed. He was very withdrawn, not speaking, not interacting with other children. Lynn's interpretation is that he has had very few experiences. The teacher of the class that he had started the year in had made very negative comments about him in all her reports; Lynn seemed outraged at her attitude and concerned that any child had to survive in such a hostile environment. He is slowly becoming more expressive and beginning to do things with other children.

> "The other day I turned my back because he was shoving somebody and I was so glad; I didn't want to stop it."

Danny receives speech therapy one half hour a day.

Michael has a very noticeable speech impairment and is labeled moderately speech handicapped.

> "When he first came into the classroom in the fall, he was almost totally silent, because he was embarassed by his speech and whether or not people would understand him. In the last couple of months he has gotten much more comfortable and talks a great deal."

Lynn said that often she cannot understand him but he seems less inhibited by how people are responding to him. He was chattering away most of the time during the observations.

One little girl, Katie is enrolled in the special class for educable mentally handicapped children, and she comes into the kindergarten class for the afternoons. Katie was born with Downs Syndrome; she is delayed in terms of cognitive skills and has some speech articulation problems. She was observed to relate primarily to adults and seldom initiated with other children. Easily frustrated by tasks, Katie would move away, when she thought she couldn't do something. She seemed to have a good understanding of routines and independently sat for snack, etc.. Lynn sees her as having good skills at "reading adults". She said she was so focused on being sure that Katie had kinds of expectations similar to the other children that she was "after her a lot in the beginning, pushing her about completing tasks or behaving appropriately."

> "I didn't realize how much I had been doing it until I heard myself copied by the other kids using my same language. I've changed my behavior and see a change in the kids in terms of that kind of focus on what Katie was doing and whether it was adequate or not."

Several mothers mentioned in parent meetings that they had not known that Danny or Katie had special needs from their children's description.

How the Children were Placed

The children labeled handicapped in Lynn's two kindergarten classes were placed through active planning between Lynn and Bernice Bates, the director of special education. With Patty and Peggy, Lynn describes "having my eye on them for two years" after she saw them at the Cerebral Palsy Clinic. She talked with Bernice and she was very supportive; they worked out the details together and then approached Bill McPeak, the school principal. Lynn described what she wanted to do and he said okay.

> "I would have been in rough shape if I needed more support from him than just an okay."

The principal himself saw the process the same way:

> "These special kids are there because she (Lynn) sought them out. It is none of my doing. The two children with cerebral palsy aren't even counted on the school attendance rolls."

He said it was Lynn's close relationship with Bernice that facilitated the placement of the children. Freeing the children from the Cerebral Palsy Clinic has been a major problem since not only has the clinic wanted to maintain their connection with the children but the families have grown to be dependent on the clinic in terms of the children's therapy. One of the long term goals for both Bernice and Lynn seems to be to the development of good physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy within the district. Bernice continues to do most of the negotiation with the clinic staff.

The part day placement for Katie was worked out between Lynn and Barb Bennett, the EMH teacher in the building. Danny and Bobby were both children attending other kindergarten classes and who were referred for evaluation by their teachers. Bernice then became involved with the children. She then approached Lynn about the children. Lynn read all the evaluation material as did the principal. She indicated she felt she'd like to try both children so she had the children and then parents come in to spend some time in her class. When that went well, then this was the recommendation made to the committee on the Handicapped. In the case of both children, Bill McPeak felt the children might be too much given her class grouping already, both in terms of their behavior and the total numbers.

> "One of his concerns was that there was no limit to the number of kids that could be placed in my class. I said, 'Well, can't you put a limit on?' He indicated to Bernice that he couldn't but then she found out that he could so she let him know the process. . . I almost got another child but he got on the phone and took care of it."

It appears that Bill asks Lynn if she can handle a child and if she says yes, he says okay. She described him coming in to observe Danny and asking for several days after Danny and Bobby entered if things were all right. Lynn also followed up by writing a report to the Pupil Personnel Team on how well Danny was doing. Rather than placement occurring randomly through neighborhood location and Committee on the Handicapped fiat, these children were carefully screened by Bernice Bates, who knowing Lynn's classroom and capabilities, asked her if she would be interested in the children. The planning was done jointly and the principal and school pupil personnel team included after initial discussions took place between Lynn and Bernice

Parents

Lynn Francis had a number of ways of interacting with the parents of both the typical and special children in her two classes. She described some difficult experiences with parents in the past and that her current approach has grown out of those times. Parents of typical children were upset that Lynn did not seem to be emphasizing academics enough.

> "About eight years ago I had a difficult experience with parents. Partly because I was the kind of teacher who thought I knew what I was doing period and never particularly felt I had to justify what I was doing. There was a group who got up a petition and it was really because I wasn't teaching reading and writing skills. I never saw it but I heard about it. I had heard about it from a few friends who lived in the area. It was really a scene. The feeling that I had at the time was that they were out to get the principal and I. He didn't really know how to respond to a community in any way other than very negatively and so consequently things got even bigger than they were."

Lynn describes how she dealt with the situation in a constructive way and that she had support from the district level administrative staff.

> "I really had felt support from the very top for a very long time, not here at this level but from the top. That year I had slides taken and I had tapes made of the kids describing what was going on in the slides. Then I had a room mother for each session show the slides and the tapes to the parents out in the hall and then they came in and spent time in the classroom. . . I was going to make the most of a difficult situation. I wrote a series of letters to parents. . . It was really in anger that I had done it at first. Then I managed to rewrite it and tone it down so it wasn't angry any more. I still sent it home. I revised it a couple of times. There was a whole lot of good that came out of a very difficult experience."

Since this experience Lynn has continued to orient parents in different ways and to write letters home to them about what the children are doing in the classroom and suggesting carryover activities to be done at home. The two days before school starts all the children and their parents are invited to come in and meet Lynn and see the classroom and most of them do come.

Lynn has for the last eight years had an active parent volunteer program as an effort to not only provide help in the classroom but to inform interested parents about what is going on and what she is trying to do in the class.

> "I found the parents were not knowing what was happening and that was a frustration to me, because how can you fail play? I really felt that if indeed I expect people to think anything other than that, then I would be the one to let them know. It was then that I started using volunteers. . . I feel that I also need to meet with them outside the classroom so they know what is happening. The more informed they are the more supportive of the program they can be. Or at least if they are not supportive then they can be very specific why. It is also important for kids to feel that if they (parents) will come in if they can. Sometimes it is tough on the ones whose folks work and they can't come in. But for the ones who are able to, the kids feel very special. I have had an occasional father but it usually doesn't hold up very long."

Lynn meets each month in the evening with the volunteers and presents different curriculum areas that she's covering in class. She feels she benefits from the meetings and it is also an opportunity to do parent training.

> "I get a tremendous amount of feedback from them. . . I gain because they ask questions. Obviously if they don't understand, then I need to do a better job. . . They learn about what goes on in a day in school. And what it means in terms of their child in relation to all the others. . . There are some other dividends because when we are discussing curriculum we are also talking about social-emotional development, and I think that I have some experiences that I need to share with parents; they can take from it what they want."

The involvement of other people in one's work can create opportunities for growth and change in an open person. Lynn is able to see herself and how her interactions with parents have had an impact on her behavior as a teacher.

> "One of the biggest things I have learned from parents in the volunteer business is when I first started having them, boy, they had to do it my way or I got so, I wasn't nasty about it but but I would be impatient inside. Why wasn't I more specific? What I find is many times they have another interesting way to do it, to play a particular game for instance. I can even tell you the name of the first parent that taught me that. I hadn't told her enough information. She had done it a whole other way but the end result was there. So one of the things I have learned is it may not be the way I would have done it nor would it have been the way I would have asked someone to do it if I had maybe given them more complete directions. But lots of times I leave some open ends now for them to do it in the way they would and I find that this is very helpful. They will do it. Also kids get involved; one child will tell the next parent, 'Well, when so and so was here we did it in such and such a way.' So there is a lot of exposure in a lot of ways. Before I use to have to do it my way all the time. I think that's one of the changes I made because I've had volunteers and parents have been involved. Some of my toughest parents have been ones who ask the most questions but probably made me learn the most in being able to talk to them about what was happening because they wouldn't let it be because I said."

The monthly meeting of parent volunteers I attended was to focus on the sequence of pre-reading and reading skills Lynn works on during the kindergarten year. There were eight parents at the meeting (each spending one half day per week in the classroom) plus Judy, Lynn's aide and Lynn and myself. We sat in child size chairs around a large pad of newsprint on an easel, where Lynn had outlined the sequence of skills she works on. As she talked about each skill (vocabulary development, comprehension, pre-writing skills, etc.) she pulled out related puzzles, games, and other manipulative materials and showed how to use each. She also offered some guidelines about adult behavior in the classroom, including her emphasis on not intervening too quickly but letting children try to work out problems on their own and to be aware of how one's own tempo affects children. After we took a short break for coffee and cookies that Lynn had provided, Lynn asked me to talk about our project. In general, mainstreaming was not the focus of volunteer meetings, so Lynn seemed interested in what the parents would say. She makes such an effort to treat the special children as part of the class and not to highlight their presence as anything unusual.

Two of the mothers described their children talking often about Peggy and Patty so much so that they expected to see their children "glued to" the two girls; they were both surprised when they came to volunteer and found that this was not the case.

> "Theresa spent the same amount of time that she spent with any other child and it wasn't that she was hovering over her all the time."

Theresa's twin sister, in the other kindergarten class, expressed envy that she doesn't have a child with cerebral palsy in her classroom "because it would be fun to push a child around in a wheelchair or ride in one yourself."

Gregg's mother said that Peggy provoked the first and only burst of enthusiasm from her son about school.

> "Usually I had to drag out of him comments about what happened at school; that was true in nursery school, too. The first day Patty came to school Gregg burst in to tell her everything about her. He talked non stop, saying he knew how to say cerebral palsy and he knew which hand Patty used the best and which one she had trouble with. . . He told me that when he grew up he was going to marry Patty and he would wheel her down the aisle. . . His attitude is that for Patty everything was possible that anyone else could do. She just did things the way she can do them."

Mrs. summary statement was that

> "Kids are so much more accepting than adults are. They have none of the expectations and stereotypes that adults have about people who are different from themselves. . . When someone raises a question about having a group home in their neighborhood these kids will say fine, instead of saying 'well, that's fine but put it in someone else's neighborhood.'"

(After the meeting,Lynn mentioned how pleased she was at Mrs. 's statement and how relaxed she seemed because this was the mother who had seemed so uncomfortable with Ruth H. And had spent two days in the classroom with Ruth and not spoken to her.)

The mothers who had typical children in the afternoon class said they did not feel their children saw anyone as having special needs. Mrs. B said her daughter had commented on the speech of one of the typical children but never mentioned Katie or Danny's speech. She did say she had noticed children telling Lynn that Katie was having trouble with a particular task. Lynn reacted by explaining that

> "Some of that was my fault. At the beginning I was so focused on being sure that there were the same kinds of expectations for Katie as for other kids. I was after her a lot, pushing her about completing tasks or behaving appropriately. I didn't realize how much I was doing this until I heard myself being copied by the kids using the same language I was."

Lynn describes herself as changing her behavior and seeing a change in the children in terms of the focus on what Katie was doing and whether it was appropriate.

A couple of parents asked whether or not children tended to imitate the behaviors or speech of the special children. Lynn's response was that they might try out particular kinds of behaviors but it never lasted long. She gave as an example Bobby imitating Danny's speech, she felt because she gave Danny a lot of attention when he returned to the room from his session with the speech therapist. So now she greets Danny but does not give him a lot of focus at that time. Lynn expressed that one of her major concerns was that she not give any one child more attention than the others. She said that she hoped parents would tell her "if your child says that Miss Francis is spending any excessive amount of time with any particular child." A mother asked what you would say to a child who was imitating another child's speech. Lynn offered several suggestions, saying

> "It depends on the child. I might say "I know you can talk to me in another way, and I'd like you to do that! Or I might say, 'Danny needs help in talking more clearly.'"

When a mother expressed concern that her daughter was copying Danny's speech, seemingly unaware that he had a speech problem, Lynn said she would let something like that go as long as the special child in question wasn't being hurt by it.

> "It's a situation where a child is just trying on another kind of behavior just as they would in the housekeeping corner playing out parent roles."

However, if the situation were one where a child's trying out acting out behaviors would trigger more of that behavior in another child, Lynn's approach would be to point out this by saying "so and so doesn't need that kind of help from you." When a child's speech is unclear, Lynn suggests asking, "Can you say it another way?", encouraging the child to rephrase what he/she wants and perhaps be more understood using different words.

These parents seemed very accepting of the fact that there were children with special needs in the kindergarten class. Their questions revolved around how they should interact (Mrs. Tallman: "I'm afraid sometimes about whether or not I should help people and what I should do, and I don't know how to ask."). They seemed proud that their children were open and accepting (more so than themselves), and they sought Lynn's perspective on issues about individual children and classroom interaction.

Parents of Special Children

The district's involvement with parents of children labeled handicapped often begins long before a child is school age. Bernice Bates, Director of Special Ed:

> "I essentially made a commitment to Peggy's mother when Peggy was eighteen months old, that there would be a place for her when she was ready for school."

Mrs. Bailey says,

> "Bernice is fantastic. When we were checking into buying houses both Gary and I decided there is no way we are going to move out of Parkerville because we are staying here just because of the schools and she is so good. . . She contacted me when Peg was quite young. Just called me up. And she came in and saw Peggy a couple of different times when she was little. Peggy started being transported when she was three and one half, going to school every day."

The placement process for each child involves heavy parent contact by both Lynn and Bernice including always a visit by the parent to the kindergarten class. After the child is enrolled Lynn keeps contact through phone calls and notes depending on the style of the family.

> "I would be inclined to feel that perhaps most of the parents (of handicapped children) need to have a little more contact from me than some other parents. For instance, with Danny's mom, I, if he misses a day of school, I get right on the phone and call her and see what's happening and I know he comes back faster than if I didn't. So I make sure that I do that. Particularly with Peg's mom, I write notes about what has gone on in the day. Usually about once a week I give her a call and the same way with Pat's grandmother. I've sort of tapered off with that and maybe it is every other week. I feel somehow it is especially important with Mark's mom; I had a lot of contact by phone last year. I have had less this year because it hasn't been as necessary. With Bobby's mom it is once a week and a regular time scheduled for her."

> "Yes, I think it is significantly different than it is for other kids probably; I would say that most of the children that I have that are handicapped, I've had a more frequent contact. However, there are some kids in the classroom that I have more frequent contact with the parents than others just based upon the needs of the child or the family."

> "I have Scott in my afternoon class, who was falling apart and crying every day and not wanting to come to school; what it appears to be is his new baby sister now three months old is beginning to show up. He was missing things at home, afraid he was missing out to something and didn't want to come to school. He would cry. He went home and told his mother he couldn't remember all the things he had to tell her. He didn't want to be gone that long. What I chose to do was write notes so that whenever he tells me he needs to write so that he can go home and give all the information to his mom that he needs. He hasn't cried in quite some time and we moved away from me writing the notes so frequently, probably three or four times a day. We turned it to other adults now to do the note writing. I see that as a special temporary need. He is not a handicapped child but I have had a lot of contact with his mom on the phone. Much more than other children because the need was there then. But I probably consistently do it with the handicapped children."

Lynn also sees parents as supporting her, by working in a coordinated way and by sharing information. She gave an example of planning a field trip the year before to see Santa Claus where you had to go on an escalator; she had been very concerned about how Tess who used a walker and often got upset would handle it. She called Tess's mother who talked with Tess about it at home and in addition, Lynn had her practice walking between pieces of tape as if it were the steps on the escalator. It worked out fine. The parents of the special children are invited in to visit not only before their child entered the class, but also any time. After Peggy's mother visited, she talked with Lynn about Peggy coming five days a week, something Mrs. B. had not seemed ready for before then.

The Individual Education Plans for each child are written by the Special Education personnel with Lynn's input. Then they all sit down with the parents and go over the draft, adding anything parents want to.

> "I find that very few people add things. I kind of think it's unfair to just reach out of the sky and ask parents, 'what is it you want?' So there is a lot of pre-work done."

Mrs. B., Peggy's mother, talked about what it was like to have Peggy in public school.

> "I really prefer Peggy to have a full day here at McKenzie or some place. I really do want her to get out of the clinic. I just feel it is about time that she be with normal children. . . . (I've seen) a lot of changes. She seems to be happier and awful tired. For her that's a big day, coming here and then going to the clinic and then coming home. She just loves it. it. She seems to be doing good as far as her alphabet. I know they are doing some at the clinic and just learning things, you know what I mean. She can spell her name. Different things like that. This is the first time that she has ever, I mean, before she was doing colors and now she is doing numbers like from 1 to 10 and all that. I think it has to do with both se settings maybe."
>
> "Does she talk to you about the kids here, the teachers?"
>
> "She points to her board and she tries to tell us something. She just loves it. I think all the kids are great. Do you know what I mean? You see them all in the way they are with Peg. I think that is really good. They seemed concerned. They all sit right there and they ask you all kinds of questions. They are really good with Peggy ."
>
> "The time I came in before they asked me about Peggy being small. Somebody said that she was small because she had cerebral palsy. And the children said that is not why Peggy is small. She is just tiny. They questioned why do you have to feed like that? Things like that."

> "I don't want Peggy to be closed in with all the handicapped. I want her to be right in the middle of things. My father knows Peggy is going to kindergarten and Peggy is his favorite. He has got other grandchildren. He can't accept it. I can tell just by so many of the things that he says. I said, 'Oh, Peggy is going three times a week.' And he said, 'Well, I don't like that and I was shocked because I thought he would really like it. He said, 'I don't think that is good for her to be with normal children because they are all going to tease her and they are going to make fun or her.' He really was upset by it. He thinks that her place is right at the clinic. I get so upset. I just couldn't believe it. He can't accept it. It is really hard. It just hurts him so bad to see her."

> "There was a time when that was all I could think about was Peggy getting older. It scared me thinking about just so many different things. But now I really just think of her being in public school and I think that is great!"

The Principal

During the initial contact with the Director of Special Education, she mentioned that the principal of McKenzie, Bill McPeak was uncomfortable about participating in this study; she described him as somewhat suspicious of people from the University having had some negative experiences when he worked in the city schools. Bill McPeak is about forty five years old, greying and thin. He reminded me early that we had met eleven years earlier while working in the city schools and spent time reminiscing about mutual acquaintances, especially the person who was school principal at that time and whom he referred to in an alternately sympathetic and deprecating way ("poor Ed"). Bill had worked at McKenzie for ten years and, as he described his entry into the principal's job, "There was a big shuffle and they squeezed him out and slipped me in." At the time of this study he had been principal there for three and one half years. Lynn and Bernice and Bill mentioned that the previous principal was very, very difficult to work with ("crazy") and comparatively Bill was easy because he had not put up blockages to what she wanted to do.

Bill's definition of a good principal seemed to revolve around the concept of discipline. "A good principal or teacher is someone who could spank a child and the child knows exactly why and doesn't hate you afterwards... A good teacher or principal is someone who is both firm and just and those two things aren't opposites, as most people expect." He described this same disciplinary role in relation to parents. When their children are acting out, "I call them in and tell them that I run this place and that the responsibility lies with me and not with them." His view of "poor Ed", the principal we had known in the past, was that he was unwilling to set limits with children and that he had been controlled by a parent/community advisory committee set up to give him advice and to whom, Bill felt, he had lost power. The disciplinarian seems central to his concept of the principal's role.

"The real variable is a good teacher" was Bill's explanation of what contributes to successful mainstreaming." A good teacher is a good teacher whether the teacher is regular or special ed." Speaking of Lynn he said:

> For her, mainstreaming children is an avocation, not even an avocation within a vocation. She's always wanting to learn, to know more, to do more, to try things out, to try things that are harder. These special kids are there because she sought them out. It is none of my doing ... She's really committed.

He mentioned the importance of the kind of expectations a teacher has for children, and that traditionally special ed had low expectations. However, he felt Lynn had very high expectations for what the special children and all the children in her class will be able to do.

Bill warned of the burden he saw on the regular teacher who is asked to take a special child into her/his classroom.

> The union is really going to get into it. Regular teachers see special ed teachers being paid more, having fewer kids, having help in terms of an aide and then sending the kids out of the room to other people. And in some cases, the special ed kids even leave an hour earlier. So the regular teacher asks, what are you doing for me? Teachers should reciprocate; they should use their special ed skills to help out the regular teacher.

He feels like special ed teachers have to persuade the regular ed teachers that they are getting something for the time and energy they have to put out when taking a special child into their classroom. ("It's a con job they have to do"). He expects that the union will be more and more involved in the mainstreaming issue. He used the phrase "union teacher": people who live by the letter of their contract and leave the minute school is over. "Secondary teachers have always been like that but elementary teachers were not; it's going to change because taking special children into their classroom is too much pressure."

An interesting factor is that Bill McPeak is a parent of a child with special needs, described as autistic-like, who has been mainstreamed with resource help since he entered school. He expressed several times his concern about his son's program and his need to express these at the next parent-teacher conference. Lynn perceived Bill as uncomfortable with children who were physically handicapped and that he felt sorry for them and therefore had lower expectations. She got frustrated, for instance, when he would carry a child down the stairs and not require them to ask for help.

While Bill expressed positive feelings about Lynn's work to me, she did not experience him as valuing what she was doing although she felt he needed to be complimented for his own work. As an example of their relationship she described a conversation between them:

> I talked to Bill about the interest of the woman from Instructor Magazine in doing a story about what is happening in my classroom. I met her at the Council for Exceptional Children Convention. People had recognized me and were talking with me about the movie (Mainstreaming in Action, a film including Lynn's classroom). This woman was very interested in following up. I mentioned it to Bill and his only comment was, 'Did you tell her that you sing and dance too.'

Lynn was clearly upset by the sarcastic response and saw this was indicative of his attitude toward her. He had been resistant to the mainstreaming film being made in her classroom one and one half years earlier, saying it wasn't going to be practical enough. He had never actually seen the film until after I came for my first visit. Lynn's view of him was as neutral at best.

> If I needed more support than just a technical approval or okay for what I'm doing, it would be tough. For other teachers who might need more help and resources for handicapped kids, he would not be in a position to offer that.

She had developed a strategy for communicating with him that relied on writing him notes, "because when we talk with each other we get off the track." She leaves him a note asking a question or telling him what she is trying to do and he responds in kind.

Relationships With Other School Staff

The only "special" teacher in the building that Lynn worked with on a regular basis was the librarian.(She also had one child, Mark, who participated in adaptive physical education.) She perceived her interactions with him as problematic because of his attitudes about children labeled handicapped.

> One of the things he tends to do is pick on kids... I guess it is probably because he doesn't know how to respond to them in a way as typical as you can to other kids. I try to do a lot of spelling out, and I jump on him, not in front of the kids but I do it afterwards.

He also is inclined to think that most kids will be on the same level at the same time, according to Lynn. She described the librarian's efforts at putting a picture of her class making ice cream into the newspaper and the one he wanted to use was of Peggy. Lynn was adamant that that picture would only be used along with the others with no comment made about the disability issue.

> I didn't hear anything more about it. I think he is trying...

When asked about how other people in the building saw her, Lynn said she didn't really know.

> I've always been the kind of teacher who did things that I believed in whether other people did them or not...

She mentioned that after other teachers in the building saw her in the mainstreaming film, she got feedback from other teachers like "what you are doing is okay as long as it is not me." She also expressed concern that regular teachers always look to a specialist for advice with labeled children.

> There is a strong side of me that says I want to do it myself!

Aides in the Classroom

Judy works as an assistant this year after having volunteered for five or six years in Lynn's class. She is in her thirties, a parent with a child coming up before the Committee on the Handicapped. During the class hours she helps with the mobility of Peggy and Patty runs small skill groups, helps individual children and helps with the general housekeeping of the classroom. She also participates in the anecdotal record keeping and diagnostic work in the classroom. All this is planned by Lynn, and Judy helps carry it out under Lynn's direction.

Lynn was clear about her need for aid in the classroom, mentioning both the strong behavioral needs of a child like Bobby and the physical needs of Peggy and Patty. Managing the group's activities and also being about to focus on the special children when they needed it would be a lot. An incident with Peggy illustrates the point. They had received a large sausage-shaped roll which the C.P. Center staff had suggested be used with Peggy. She had placed Peggy on the roll as they had taught her to do. When it was time to move, Peggy's legs had tensed up so much that Lynn could not get her off the roll. It took her ten minutes of massaging to relax Peggy's limbs so she could move her off the roll. During that time Judy ran the group activities.

> If I had been alone in the room, I really would have been in a pickle.

Lynn had many feelings about the complexity of working with someone else in the classroom and the complexity of supervision. There were the positive feelings of "sharing information with somebody and seeing them grow is exciting." But also there are the feelings of impatience and frustration when someone is doing things in a different and "ineffective" way.

> Because Judy had been a volunteer for five or six years, I was inclined to assume she has had some experiences that she really, indeed, hasn't had...

Kids can ask me anything and I will respond. Adults ask me and I'm a whole lot better than I used to be. But I think, "how come they didn't see it because it was right in front of them." But I guess if you don't look at it, it isn't there. I am sometimes impatient with that kind of stuff. Another thing I get impatient with is if I directed somebody to do something, like Judy, and I see her getting caught in a kid's trap over and over again; I get impatient with that. But what I am learning are ways to help her see it herself. It is hard for me because I see it but I find it difficult to describe to somebody else sometimes how I know. It is just sort of instinctive. And in the early part of the year, I was really quite impatient with her about those kinds of things. I would think, "Oh my gosh, I've already told her that." But I am finding that one of the things I am trying to do is have her watch me at times so I'm modeling. She is a lovely gal and has a whole lot of skills but at times there is something she gets stuck on by not seeing. One of the things was happening with a child in the class. The kid was a very dependent kid. I had managed to cut the apron strings a little but and the first thing you know, she latches onto Judy. And she just had her smothered. Judy didn't know that she had been through that with me before Judy had ever come on the scene or at least if she had, hadn't really seen it. So we talked about it but I really had to do a lot of demonstration.

Lynn's major complaint about other adults in the classroom is their unwillingness to wait for kids and let kids do it themselves; their expectations seem lower about what kids will be able to do.

> It frustrates the heck out of me when adults can't wait for kids. It does in terms of the two girls and it does with me with every kid. The adults can't wait to answer my questions when I know that kids could do it. That probably frustrates me maybe even more with Patty and Peg because I know that they are going to need some extra time, particularly Peggy , than some other kids. It is like repeating the questions because they didn't hear it. This thing happens between Judy and I, and we can talk about it so it is not too big a thing. I'm inclined to expect perfection from her too which doesn't help.
>
> I give her feedback but occasionally I am a little bit careful about it. Today I was a little more careful because she was overwhelmed about other things. Sometimes I do it in front of kids by saying 'one of the things we need to do is' or 'we might try it this way.' Today Peggy is busy looking around at other people and we were doing our cutting activity. We now have scissors stuck in a hunk of clay and the paper taped down,

> and I had gone through that with Judy in front of Peg. I had told her that we were going to try it and I tried positioning and so forth. I was at the table helping some other kids and Judy was helping Peggy with the whole activity which had to do with the name of the picture and what sound it began with and she had to point to the letter. There was a choice of three letters. Peggy wasn't responding. She was capable of doing this. I think I would have chosen to handle that non verbally. I did move in and handle it non verbally. All my cues weren't picked up but I did because this badgering business on any kid because you don't respond the first time doesn't mean you didn't hear. And then the other thing I chose to do was I was helping everybody else at the table and I wasn't helping her. I also felt that that was part of what was operating. Wherever I would be I could see something so I said, 'Perhaps I can help Peggy with the last one if you will save one for me,' because she sees me helping with other children and then she did it. That was all okay. Also, I could be a model for Judy in a non verbal kind of stuff. But I know that was what was happening. I think I probably read kids relatively well in that way and I sometimes get frustrated because other people don't. Other adults don't. I'm better about it than I used to be, better in that I have more patience with it.

Lynn also described the difficulty of dividing responsibilities and having them carried out. Part of the time Judy would remember to do "the little things like setting a timer" and part of the time she would not. Lynn has had to have the attitude that she will do it herself and if Judy carries them, fine.

> Now that I'm doing that, I find that I am less impatient because I just know that I'm going to carry things. It is really no big thing. It's almost like turning around in a way, the whole business... I make the most of it. If I choose not to make the most of it, the whole class is going to be a mess.

A Special Volunteer

Lynn had met Ruth Hall when she went to observe Leslie, an older child who was integrated into a regular class in another school. Ruth was volunteering with Leslie and asked to visit Lynn's classroom to meet Peggy and Patty. Since her first visit she had been coming into the kindergarten off and on, and Lynn had encouraged her to volunteer on a regular basis.

Ruth appears to be in her forties, with short hair and glasses with the left lens patched. She uses a wheelchair as she has been paralyzed on her left side since surgery for a brain tumor; the surgery left her with limited use of her left arm, hand, leg and also significant hearing and vision loss on her left side and somewhat slurred speech. Ruth had been a teacher a number of years ago but had not worked in schools for eighteen years. She mentioned what an adjustment it was to be with children so young.

Ruth expressed her surprise at how well mainstreaming was working in Lynn's class.

> If you start in kindergarten, it's really good... The children treat Peggy and Patty like everyone else.

She seemed to have easily developed a relationship with Patty but was not as comfortable with Peggy. With Patty, "we didn't get our work done because we had such a good time talking with each other." Patty had asked Ruth if she could get out of her wheelchair and how, and if Ruth ever got mad, saying she (Patty) got mad at herself! Ruth mentioned her frustration at the time it takes to communicate with Peggy because of her language board and said the same thing was true for Leslie, the twelve year old she worked with.

Bernice Bates had made the initial contact with Ruth, feeling that the physically handicapped children in the district could benefit from a model. Lynn had been committed to this idea, since two years earlier she had had a young man who was disabled spend time with Sandy, and one of these sessions was captured in the film on mainstreaming. Lynn had even suggested that Leslie come over and work with Peggy but the teachers didn't feel she was ready yet. Lynn felt Leslie would be excited by the idea of helping someone else. A teenage boy had recently visited at Lynn's invitation; he had had a swimming accident and was now quadraplegic and was having a difficult adjustment, not wanting to come to school. Lynn introduced him to Ruth as well.

In many ways Lynn's reaction to working with Ruth paralleled her concerns about any other adults in the classroom. She felt Ruth needed structure by Lynn to be able to handle a small group activity and that Ruth tended to overprotect Patty and that "Ruth falls for Peggy's trivia questions and her behavior in terms of getting adult attention." Lynn said she was starting to make Patty "stretch" to get to Ruth by not always having them placed in the same group. Some of the activities that children were asking Ruth to help them with were difficult for Ruth to do physically (e.g., button their paint smocks) and Lynn was concerned about that.

According to Lynn, Ruth had grown a lot over the months she'd been spending in the classroom in terms of her comfort level with children, her skills, and her feelings about herself. It was apparently very upsetting for her to respond to the children's direct questions about "what was wrong with her." She also commented to Lynn that "I was really jealous, Lynn, after the first time I came here because you could get around and do all this with kids." Ruth had also chastized Lynn for having Jessica spread her own peanut butter, saying "I hate it. You need to freeze the bread. I hate doing it." Ruth thought Lynn was being too tough with Patty and Lynn said to Ruth that she was being to over-protective. Ruth's growing confidence was also indicated by her attendance at a school board meeting where she read a letter she'd written supporting the special education program and it's budget. She had been nervous about whether people would understand her speech, but she read the letter.

This involvement of Ruth and the children in Lynn's class has seemed to be one of mutual benefit!

Relating to Outside Agencies

Parkerville School District contracts with the Cerebral Palsy Center to provide "related services", primarily occupational therapy (O.T.) and physical therapy (P.T.) to Peggy and Patty ; legally Peggy and Patty are placed at the C.P. Center for their educational program and Lynn's class is viewed as supplemental. Carol Cane the chief speech therapist and head of the Communications Department at the Cerebral Palsy Center, follows up the children who are placed in their home districts. She expressed her ideas about what produces quality programs for children. These include: (a) "a sincere desire on the part of the district to genuinely accept the child"; (b) parental enthusiasm and participation; (c) "a classroom teacher like Lynn who is genuinely caring and really wants these kids to have a good experience"; and (d) "The transitional support we (CP Center) try to provide".

> Administration is important but not as important as the other components I've mentioned.

In addition, a major focus of successful programming, from Ms. Cane's point of view, is facilitating successful social experiences for children who have often been sheltered and only with "other involved children like themselves."

> Interacting with other classrooms, other teachers, other people, meeting, learning, talking, relating - these are critical. I almost think initially that is much more important to the child's overall growth and development than the academic. I'm not too worried about the three r's. That will come and that should come at the child's own pace and capacities and intellectual potential. I am more concerned about, initially, fitting that child into a milieu that really is very foreign to them. Kids that can walk and talk and run and jump and play and that is much different and they have to fit into that. I know that's

> what Lynn is trying to do. She is not really pushing the a,b,c's and the letters and the numbers. That will come. There is time for that. Peggy is young but Lynn is giving her time to see the other kids, work with the other kids, talk with them, paint with them, play with them, get dirty with them, roll on the floor with them. She lets the other kids experience her in the sense of, 'hey, you know what, Peggy may not be just like me but she's really a kid too and has the same kinds of thoughts and feelings and ideas that I do. She may be physically a little different, maybe she doesn't run and play as fast as I do, but she is really a kid just like me.' Those are the kinds of things I think Lynn is beginning to bring out in the children. I know she is trying to develop attitudes of acceptance.

The C.P. Center staff sees itself as providing consultation to teachers and parents around P.T., O.T., and communication; providing direct therapy to children, and developing adaptive equipment. These roles require communication with classroom teachers, special education directors and parents. Many different adults are involved (the C.P. classroom teacher, occupational therapist, physical therapist, language consultant like Carol Cane) and questions of control could be expected to arise.

Lynn has strong feelings about the frustrations of working with the Center around Peggy and Patty's educational program. These frustrations include (a) broken equipment which the Center is supposed to fix and doesn't; (b) lack of cooperation in sharing essential equipment; (c) control of the schedule of related services; (d) competition between Lynn and Center staff over how things should be done. Equipment is crucial for Peggy and Patty to facilitate their mobility and communication. Lynn described Peggy's "buggy" coming into school with a piece missing and after notifying the Center and requesting it be fixed, days went by without the repair. Finally, Lynn had the custodian at McKenzie fix it - even though it was the Center's responsibility. Peggy is dependent on her communication board for any conversation other than yes and no since she has no vocal language. Several times the teacher at the Center forgot to put

Peggy's communication board on the bus with her, meaning that she had nothing to use in the classroom. The Center staff never produced a separate communication board for Peggy's mother to use with her at home - so finally Lynn spent several hours at home making one. Lynn's perception was that Peggy's teacher from the C.P. Center was uninspired in her lessons and that she was threatened by Lynn and when she visited the class at McKenzie expressed mostly criticism. When the teacher admitted her amazement at how well Peggy was integrated into the group, Lynn was very pleased. The teacher mentioned, for instance, how much time Peggy was moved and repositioned and Lynn said, "yes, just like any other child in my classroom." Lynn had often asked Bernice Bates to run interference for her with the Center staff but toward the end of the spring, began to be willing to deal with them on her own. She became more willing to communicate directly what her concerns were. These include having the child work with too many adults; the quality of the therapy time for the kids but also Lynn needing to learn the physical interventions to use; and therapists interrupting important classroom events to do their direct work with a child.

The Director of Special Education

Bernice Bates , the Director of Special Education, had initiated bringing a severely handicapped child back to the district from a segregated school in 1972 when she was a district-wide resource teacher. Bernice described a principal saying to her after observing the child, "Don't you think you have bitten off a lot more than you can chew? Why this child is nothing but an animal. This child looks more like an animal than a person." Since that time the Parkerville district has been known for its innovative special education program; there are now three hundred children classified as handicapped in the district. At a school board meeting, the superintendent had stated that this positive reputation was all due to Bernice and not the school board. Bernice mentioned that several board members have been very supportive of her. Lynn's perception of Bernice's central role is as follows:

> I think she probably has been the key all over the district. And she would probably say it's because she had the staff to work with and that she did. She would always say that. But I think she was also a model for a lot of staff, and, because she was willing to take a risk, they would take a risk also... I think she sees an awful lot of kids being in public schools that a lot of people don't. I think that her orientation has been that way for a long time. She would probably have worked with a person that would be most able to work with. I think probably, for instance, if she wanted to look at a number of kids for next year that are handicapped in a kindergarten setting, I think the person she would start with is the person who is most ready and work on taking the others along the continum. So I would see that as probably how it started. Even before the laws were around and even before she was in a district position at the district level that she is at now.

Bernice's comment is that you need "really committed people at all levels" for mainstreaming to work. The principal must at least provide "access, say yes or no, so the child can enter the building and not put up hurdles for the teacher and the other resource support staff working with the teacher."

Bernice's role includes not only placement of disabled students in classrooms but orchestration of the Committee on the Handicapped process, dealing with the budget and other administrators and the Board, responding to parents, and providing support and inservice to teachers. She is in the classrooms a lot, observing and talking with teachers, asking teachers what they need in the way of ideas, materials or consultant help and then she tries to get it for them. She makes a clear effort to give principals information about everything but there is a direct line of communication between Roberta and the teachers. Bernice emphasized the independence under which she was used to operating. There is no formal inservice for administrators around special ed issues but Bernice will have personal contact with principals around issues affecting their building and she participates in the district's cabinet of department heads.

The importance of the Committee on the Handicapped as a support to Bernice was clear. She described being very excited about the group decision-making process. In addition she mentioned how supportive parents had been to her and that she hoped parents would create a parent's advisory group to the special education program. Her greatest frustration appeared to be the lack of experience with disabled children, of several of her school psychologists; they don't share the same perspectives about labeling and how children should be served in the schools. Bernice's personal commitment to parents was evident from conversation with Mrs. Bailey, Peggy's mother who described Bernice's continuing contact with her since Peggy was a year and a half old.

Lynn expressed extremely positive feelings about Bernice's support to her over her years in the district, including an early inservice course Bernice had taught on children with special needs.

> Ninety percent of my support has come from her. Frankly, she's the only one who has ever challenged me to do more than I've done. She is also a great supporter of taking risks. She is a risk taker herself; she will try something that other people haven't done and I have a lot of respect for that. I also have said for one hundred years, I wish I had half of her skills with parents. I use to say it and say it and not do much about it. Well, I have done something about it and I probably have a few of her skills now. I don't have a half but I have a third. I have learned a lot from her in those ways... We have talked about it. I can remember her saying to me, she had run across kids along the way that I had and the things she would hear about me from parents in the way I came across was like, it was unreal. She used to give me feedback on that for one thing which was helpful. It has become more and more and more important as the years have gone on and I have done more and more about it really since I've specifically had handicapped kids. Each year

> has been a little better but this year is a whole lot better than last. And last was a whole lot better than the year before. I think in a support person, I would say for anybody, that well most of all for me, it has to be somebody creative and I have to have a person who is going to ask questions to stimulate my evaluation of my behaviors in the classroom. There aren't very many people that I have had the experience that can do that. I use to see it as criticizing when I first knew her perhaps. Not that she was criticizing me. I would take it as criticizing because she would be right. When she asked the question she knew what was right about what I was doing. I have also needed a person to bounce questions off of. Just a description of an experience. I don't need that so much any more. I enjoy doing that with her because she knows I can talk about a kid and use very few words and we can enjoy it together. I do enjoy it with her. I used to need her support in that way, a great deal, especially last year with Tess because of the nature of Tess emotionally. She was just not a kid I had ever run across before. I used to spend a good many hours with her and she would say to me, 'Lynn, listen to what you are saying.' Frankly, that is the kind of support I need. It doesn't matter who it comes from. If I could get that support from someone else, that is what I need in support. Probably the kind of support I have needed for a long time. I am not heavy with having to be told every move to make and never have been. Can't hack that whole scene. But I know some who need that. So I guess the support should be whatever it is you need. As a matter of fact, that is one of the skills that she has is being able to talk with somebody and know where they are at and know how to take them to the next step whatever their thinking is. That is a skill I would like. It is coming but I have to think of it in terms of the librarian. I don't think everybody can do that either. To me, that is the key in a support person. Whether it is resource, whether it is the physical therapist, occupational or whatever it is.

Lynn's respect for Bernice's skills is clear. Reciprocally, Bernice expressed strong positive feelings about Lynn and her growth in terms of her willingness to be assertive with adults, her confidence in terms of techniques with children and her ability to supervise others. She seemed to enjoy interacting with Lynn as a peer. Her perceptions of Lynn's commitment to children and her skills were illustrated in an anecdote about Danny's first introduction to the classroom and Lynn. Danny had been seen by his original kindergarten teacher as completely unmanageable; she did not like him and saw him as aggressive and disturbed. Bernice arranged for Danny and his mother to visit Lynn's class. At the end of the hour, when it was time to go, Danny reached up and gave Lynn a big hug. For Bernice this reflected Danny's instinct about the difference between the hostile classroom environment he had come from and the climate and personality Lynn radiates. Bernice states, "If you've got committed people, then you can find a way to do anything. I wait for Lynn to tell me how things should be and then I work out an administrative way to make them happen."

LYNN AS A TEACHER

There are basic attitudes and skills that Lynn has as a teacher which facilitate mainstreaming. These follow her commitment to special and typical young children and to teaching as a profession.

Typical Expectations Lynn has expectations for the special children that mirror those of typical children their age and she exerts great effort to not single them out. For example, when Bill McPeak wanted to write an article about Peggy and Patty in Lynn's class, she said no; what needs to be demonstrated is that they are no different than any other child coming to school.

> They belong. I believe they do and if it is handled in a matter-of-fact way, then it will happen. If it's made to be something special, then it is going to be looked at as something special, not as the way it should be.

This attitude is reflected in how Lynn parcels out her own time and what she asks the children to do and how she helps present the special children to their peers. Lynn raised a concern that all of the children get enough of her; Judy is technically in the classroom to work with special children but Lynn has a lot of contact with them, too. She seems aware every second of what these kids are doing in the classroom and even when they are working with other adults, she is attending to what's happening for them.

Her expectations that each child do what they can is evident in all her interactions, from requiring Peggy to point very precisely to her language board to requiring Katie to say "tie shoe" rather than just putting up her foot to Lynn.

> Sometimes people that come into the classroom feel like I give the kids things that are too difficult for them to do. I emphasize high expectations but I don't give kids stuff that is too hard.

Adults seem to be afraid of pushing the special children, and Lynn often steps in. Lynn also makes a strong effort to have all the children do the same activity. For instance, Lynn was giving kids practice in following directions as they went up to get their coats to go home. The children asked for three step directions ("touch the blue table, walk around the water fountain, and hop on one foot"). Peggy used her buzzer to get Lynn's attention for her turn. Lynn asked Judy to put Peggy in her stroller, then Lynn gave her three directions, and Judy wheeled Peggy around the room.

The special children's typical behavior is as strong a focus for as their special needs. Lynn relates to Peggy "telling stories" as typical of children who are five years old, when Peggy indicates she and John Paul (another child from the CP Center) went to visit Patty in the hospital. Lynn relates below how she does adapt the program for the children's needs, but only if absolutely necessary.

> I think about the expectations being basically the same except for the fact that I need to have some concerns about physical kinds of adjustments or perhaps with a child who has more difficulties, then I have to make some adjustments. Well, again, with a child like Mark, I may need to show him instead of just tell him the directions. The final expectation is really for every child to do something the best way they can do it. For instance, Bobby has such a terribly terribly difficult time with trying to learn stuff. He knows that he does and he doesn't want any part of doing it. One of the first experiences that I had with him a couple days in, was we did a cutting and pasting project and I knew it was going to be tough but I just moved in

> with scissors and said, 'This is the way I am going to help you,' because he really didn't want to. He has really been accepting knowing I am going to give him help. He may not know in what way. Because I knew he could do that independently with a fair amount of success, and I knew that he wasn't getting things done fast enough. Kids were far too far ahead of him, so I just got out those helping scissors and we just finished it right off. He really felt good about it and said to me, 'This is how you helped me.' I don't know if he had that experience before...
>
> In terms of behavior I only bend when I feel it is necessary to bend, I hope. For instance with a kid like Bobby and a kid like Danny. Yes, I bend and the expectation is there but it may take them longer to get there and they may need a whole lot more help from me. The final expectation is still there and I think they know that. I choose to sometimes ignore it and they move in. And sometimes I choose to give them a whole lot of structure so they can. But the expectation is still there. It doesn't always get there but the expectation is there. It might take us a whole lot longer with one child than another. For instance with Bobby, the expectation is that he is not going to be hitting me. He is not going to do it, whatever, but we may have a few difficulties getting to that point. The end result would be the same. I think because of the expectations, these kids will be as independent as they can be. Maybe it is one of the tougher things to do particularly with the physically handicapped child because of the desire of the kids to help and over help. Just recently, Peg was drawing with a magic marker all by herself. It really wasn't recognizable. It was scribbling. In fact, when I stopped to see Pat that was one thing she said, "That Peg had scribbled on her picture that she had made for her.' We talked about how she did it all by herself and how important that is.

Preparing for and Talking about Special Kids Lynn had used the D.L.M. materials on handicaps with both her morning and afternoon classes as a general curriculum, placing the cerebral palsy materials last in her presentation. With Danny and Bobby, Lynn just said there was a new child in the class - nothing else. She facilitated the entry of Peggy and Patty by saying each time she had met a little girl who would be joining their class. She told things about each child: What things she liked, what kinds of things she could do, and that she was disabled. The children saw a copy of Peggy's communication board and learned a number of the symbols and what the photographs meant and how to use the board.

She had also told the afternoon class about Peggy and Patty (both morning children) because of all of the special furniture in the classroom. The first day that Peggy came, the kids really overwhelmed her by crowding around pointing to the communication board, asking her questions. Lynn used the group meeting with the kids to talk about communicating with Peggy one at a time, pointing more slowly and giving Peggy time to respond.

Lynn seems careful to respond directly to children's questions about disabilities as well as to attitudes expressed in actions. For instance, when Patty stopped coming in on Wednesdays because her grandmother felt it was too long a day to go to the CP Center and McKenzie, the children asked where she was. Lynn ended up in a long conversation about the CP Center and what physical therapy was. She discussed the tension in the two girls' bodies and how she tries to relax them, demonstrating some of the equipment with several of the typical children. One child (who had said he was told not to touch "people with bumps") asked Lynn, "Why is it that you keep meeting people to bring into our class?" And, if Peggy would be able to talk like he and she were talking when she was grown up. Lynn said, "no." Lynn's observation of the physically handicapped children often being treated as the baby in the housekeeping corner provoked her setting up the play situation with Peggy as the mother.

Trusting Children To Do It Themselves A strong belief of Lynn's is that children can come through and solve problems themselves. She feels that adults often jump in and take over, "doing things for kids without waiting them out and giving them a chance to do it for themselves." She will observe a situation and seem to be ignoring it, to see if children will deal with it on their own. This was increasingly evident as children have more experience with each other and can be less dependent on adults to mediate for them. An example Lynn cited was an incident between Peggy and Kristy, a typical child, playing together in the housekeeping corner.

> Kristy came up to me and said, 'Miss Francis , she just asked me to ask you if she could go to the sand table.' I knew if I got close enough that it would shut off. Peggy had flipped the second page of her language board and had obviously pointed to the sand table picture. The whole business had been carried on between them.

Facilitating Integrated Interactions Teachers can create situations where typical and special children interact. These can include activities where children are in close contact and can spontaneously play or communicate or cooperate. In addition, the adult can set up a structure to encourage interaction and can intervene in an activity when necessary.

Patty , who is quite verbal, is more easily integrated than Peggy, whose use of the language board is an obstacle to quick communication. Patty functions as a typical child in group verbal activities and many of the academic type tasks. Here are some typical interactions between Patty and her peers.

> Danny had made a bowtie and Patty asked to try it on. Danny said, 'You look real pretty in it. Want me to make you one?' He was describing how he made it, showing her the tape and everything. And Patty said yes.
>
> Lynn had all the kids move to the floor and she brought over the amaryllis for them to measure. The kids have been measuring it for the last couple of weeks looking at how rapidly it was growing. Patty was put down against the roll, propped up against it and some of the kids moved in order for her to get on the floor. Patty crawled around and maneuvered to get herself comfortable. A couple of the other kids were leaning on the roll and Patty said to them, 'Move, Cary Ann,' and then said to another child, 'stop it, hold still.' She said at one point, 'I need to side sit. Hold it still. Don't move it.' At another point a little later she was wiggling to get herself comfortable and she touched Theresa who was sitting on the other side of the roll and said, 'Sorry, I didn't mean to.'

> At snack time, kids asked to sit next to Patty . At one point, Patty asked for more pretzels and Judy said there was only enough for one time around. Patty just smiled and watched the other kids while they were eating. The kids were making April Fools jokes including jokes about peoples' underwear being on fire. Patty was totally involved as was Mark in the humor at the table. All of them were laughing. Patty said that the teacher's underwear was on fire, and everyone laughed uproarously.
>
> Lynn was trying to get Patty to clean up and said to her, 'Patty , stack the letters and put them in the box.' Patty then turned to me and said, 'Ms. Barnes, will you help me?' I said, 'I think Ms. Francis wants you to do it yourself.' She continued to do it. The kids interrupted her, and Lynn said, ' Patty needs to do her business.' The kids all helped her until it was done. Patty asked Lynn if she could hear a record. Sandy was hanging around beside Patty and Sandy wheeled Patty over to the record player. Lynn set up the story about Poncho. They listened together. She afterwards got wheeled to the book corner, and she and Kristy read a book together looking at it and turning the pages, laughing and talking. Some of the other kids were playing with puppets. Then they moved out to the rug area where several of the kids were doing fantasy play. Shelly said, 'Patty you want to come into the house?' Patty said yes. Shelly said to Lynn, ' Pat wants to come into the house.' And Lynn said, 'She knows what she has to do. She just has to ask me.' Patty was obviously not going to ask. Patty was sitting strapped in her chair and she took off the belt that strapped her in while she was sitting there. She was about two feet away from the house where the other kids were playing. Several of the kids were, at this point in time, riding in her wheelchair.
>
> Lynn said that last week the kids had gotten Patty into the house. Greg had problem solved and had put both the roll and the wedge in the house, and Patty crawled in and then she had something to lean on. Lynn said she knows how to ask and she knows she needs to ask. Though Lynn was watching her slightly anxiously when she saw that Patty had taken off the strap that was holding her into the chair. Lynn's comment was, 'I guess she may take a fall. She may take a nasty tumble but it would make her independent.' During this time, Patty was totally directed to other kids encouraging them. She called out, 'Danny, Shelly needs a doctor.' Shelly was playing inside the house and the kids were playing rowing like they were a boat on the sea. At one point Pat said to Darren, 'Die for me.'

The above situation of open play allows for a wide variety of interactions between Patty and other children.

Peggy's play with other children more often required Lynn to facilitate it.

Peggy was over in the housekeeping corner at the table with three other girls, and Sandy was showing her the new toaster which someone had donated to the housekeeping corner. Two of the other girls were working on what appeared to be mother's day cards. A little later Sandy (a typical child) came over to Lynn and said, 'Peggy wants to make a mother's day card, and I don't know how to get her hand open so she can hold the marker.' Lynn went over and showed Sandy how to open Peggy's fingers, how if she puts pressure on her thumb, then she can move her thumb and catch the marker underneath and hold it in her hand. But Lynn said Peggy's hand is very tight today. Peggy clearly wanted to do this herself.

Peggy indicated on her language board that she wanted Cary Anne to play with her in the housekeeping corner. Lynn went over to Cary Anne and said Peggy would like to play with you and then Judy picked up Peggy and moved her to the dressup area of the housekeeping corner. Cary Anne came over immediately. Cary Anne was putting shoes on Peggy and Peggy was looking at the shoes. Then Peggy clearly wanted something and it turned out that it was the hat that one of the other kids was trying on. I came over to see what was going on and Lynn said to me, 'Ms. Barnes, I think Peggy is interested in the pink hat that Sandy has.' So Sandy had already thrown it back into the pile and after having tried to get Peggy interested in any of the other clothes, I said to her, 'Is this what you want?' And she nodded yes. I said, 'do you want me to put it on your head?' She nodded 'yes'. So I put it on. She moved the mirror so she could see herself in the mirror. Meanwhile, Cary Anne kept trying to see if Peggy was interested in different pairs of shoes that were in the box of shoes. Peggy kept shaking her head and Cary Anne would hold up a pair and say, 'Do you want these shoes?' And Peggy kept shaking her head no.

Peggy turned her head and watched two other girls, Sandy and Lynn, who were busy at the play stove and play sink pretending to wash dishes, dusting the floor, moving pots and pans around. Lynn came over and asked Peggy what she wanted and put the language board back on the front of Peggy's chair so that Peggy could point to what she wanted to do. She pointed to housekeeping and Lynn said, 'You are in housekeeping.' And then Lynn said, 'Do you want to wash?' because the kids were pretending to wash the dishes and there was no wash-the-dishes spot on her language board. There was only "water" and "take a bath". And Lynn said that to her, 'There isn't any place here for you to say that.' So Lynn moved her from the front of the mirror and at that point, the two girls were starting to set up the little table to have a pretend meal and Lynn moved saying to Lynn and Sandy, 'Move Peggy to the table.' And they proceeded to play for about ten minutes putting dishes on the table, giving her plastic food, talking mostly with each other as they were going about what they were doing. And Peggy was watching them the whole time, tracking them with her eyes, taking the utensils they were giving her to use.

Lynn initiated contact between children such as asking a child to sit behind Patty on the floor so she could lean against him. She also programmed directly by having the children practice with bliss symbols, flash cards, as an activity during transition times. (This was a favorite game and the kids suggested Peggy be part of it.) In an academic game Lynn said she wanted Patty to play a major role.

> A group of children were playing letter bingo. Lynn said, 'I want Patty to be the caller.' Gregg said, 'She can't.' Lynn said, 'Why not?' 'Because Patty has C.P.' " Patty can say letters.' One of the kids said, 'Well if it was Peg, Peg can't say letters.' And Lynn said, 'Well, it's not Peg. Pat is here today. She can hold them up too.'

Crisis intervention by the teacher also headed off upsets or facilitated solutions, while redirecting children to interact with each other.

> Bobby was starting to get a little upset because a pipecleaner that was part of the glasses that Michele had made him had fallen off and he sort of held it up non-verbally to Lynn showing it to her. She said, 'Well Michele made it. Ask Michele to help you fix it.' He sort of ran toward the center of the room, kind of undirected and Lynn again said, 'Ask Michele.' He then stopped and scanned the room and visually was able to pinpoint where Michele was and went over to her and handed her the pipecleaner. She fixed it for him and handed it back to him. She even helped put the glasses on him and bend the stems around his ears.
>
> Brian had been building a building with lincoln logs and Danny had accidentally kicked it over. Danny ran into the bathroom, clearly very upset. Lynn had gone after him and asked him to come back and help Brian rebuild his building. Danny came back with her but didn't seem to know what to do, and Brian would hand Danny a block and show Danny where to put it.
>
> Lynn: Jason was literally dragging Patty across the floor by her arms. I intervened saying, 'It's alright to say to him, I don't want you to do that.' I didn't move in right away. I watched it for a couple of minutes. I didn't think she had complained because I think he would have stopped if he had felt that he was hurting her. Jason is quite a sensitive little boy. I think she was eating it up for one thing. I really wanted to let it go on entirely in a way but I wasn't sure that maybe Jess may be getting hurt. I also wasn't sure where she was at with it. Another kid would haul off and wack him.

Adaptations for Mainstreaming The need for special equipment for the physically handicapped children is the most obvious adaptation in this mainstreamed situation. The use of this equipment requires special spatial arrangements and planful moving of it in and out. According to Lynn, the most frustrating aspect of the physical needs of the children is going on fieldtrips. Over the years Lynn also has accumulated a large number of materials to teach the same skill to children at different levels. Lynn's use of learning centers allows her to group children in different ways.

> I never assign kids to a center because of their skill level. I cross group for a variety of reasons. I cross group very often for social emotional interchange as well as skill development. I will put a kid who doesn't have the skill of matching letters at the bingo game when all they can do is hold up a card and a kid can match visually even if he doesn't have an idea in the world what that letter name is. So he can get the visual. He feels like he's doing things with other kids and, if I am not there, I can't structure the interchange but I often put a kid in what I think is strong enough to help some of that.
>
> I also think that I need to have some spots where I try to put in a cross grouping, ability wise, socially, emotionally, really the whole gamut, so the kids can try to work things out themselves and if they can't, why then they usually ask how.

Lynn uses material prompts to make it easier for Peggy to participate such as scissors attached to a wooden base and clay to hold marbles for games and masking tape on the back of the bingo cards. Lynn also expended great effort in helping Peggy focus and participate in activities.

> Lynn sat next to Peggy and kept refocusing Peggy's attention on the cards. She would say, 'This time it's the red triangle. Peggy, do you have a red triangle? Look, here's the triangle card. Do you have that on your card? Show me where it is on your card.' Peggy would sometimes focus, sometimes look around, sometimes reach with her whole hand for her card instead of pointing. But Lynn, when she kept continually refocusing her, was able to elicit the appropriate responses from Peggy and Peggy was obviously able to make the visual discriminations of shape and color that were necessary to play the game.

Clinical Thinking Lynn is able to think analytically about children and about her own teaching. She eagerly solicits feedback from others, wants to share and problem-solve with others about her classroom. Her interactions with the director of special ed served to give her new ideas about kids and her interventions with them. Her need for that kind of contact within the school were most often not met; her reaction to the former school resource teacher is an example.

> One of the frustrating things was that she never knew what I was talking about when I was talking about the social emotional kinds of needs and also ways to respond. I used to be very frustrated by it. I never could communicate with her about it. Those emotional kinds of things, never, right until the day she left. Yet, we had known each other for six years and really had worked closely with a lot of kids and I could never communicate with her about it.

Lynn's focus on the emotional and behavioral needs of the children was constant. And this area was the most challenging to Lynn in terms of her own learning. The intensity of her involvement with a child like Bobby is evident in this routine review of his day.

> Lynn stood at the door after all the kids went out and said to Bobby, "I want to talk to you." She knelt down and she had him leaning against her with her arm around him. She said, 'I want to talk a little bit about what your day was like.' She went from the beginning of the day to the end of the day having him go through what did we do first and how was it and then what did you do in the group and what did you do at center time and having him say when he needed help and then he had asked her for help with something that was hard for him to do, which he said spontaneously. He seemed very focused on Lynn and able to recall the details of the day and what kinds of things he had worked on in each of those times. Around a couple of things, she said 'How did you do?' And he said, 'I did a good job.' She said, 'That is right. You did an excellent job!'

Lynn uses this routine of reviewing the day with herself and Judy as well. They sit down after the children leave and talk about kids' days and progress, especially the special children. She analyzes not only the children's behavior, but her own. Lynn's interaction with this researcher also demonstrated her strong interest in feedback and her own constant reassessment of the children and her teaching. I had, for instance, asked her a question about Katie. Her comments several weeks later reveal her thoughtfulness about her teaching and her clinical skills.

> One of the things that I wanted to pick up with you is in terms of Katie. I listened carefully to your question to me and I realized that one of the things that had happened was that things were not so terrific with Katie. I tended to be at her for a great many more things than I would be with other kids. What I heard happening then, I heard her mimicking like she was mimicking a whole lot of spots so I knew it wasn't always me. Then I began to hear the kids getting after her in the same way that I had. I hadn't realized I was. I have made some changes in that way. And I think there is more acceptance of her because of that and yet what you are seeing is probably the beginnings of that and because I saw what it was like before, my perspective was different than yours. That was a good question to me.
>
> I really should have been like any other kid in knowing some of the behaviors, focusing on some that I am sure were appropriate but some of them I was over emphasizing. So I see the beginnings of moving in. She is still somewhat on the periphery but I did realize, and I can't tell you when I did start realizing, that I needed to make a change and started doing something about it.
>
> I tend to expect myself to make less mistakes with the handicapped kids than I would other kids. I think I pretty well resolved that feeling. I am going to make mistakes with them as much as I do with other kids and they still survive it all. Yes, I may take a few steps backwards. I was very hard on myself and I don't seem to be so much any more. It's a good feeling.

LYNN'S FUTURE PLANS

Lynn expressed her dreams about the future of her class. She wants to have fifteen typical kids and four or five handicapped children in each class. And in a few years she'd like the idea of having a kindergarten in the high school where she could have older youth participate. A combination kindergarten, first and second grade, and a full-day kindergarten would be a possibility as well. She expressed her continued need for a limit on the class size and an aide. The current plan for the following school year includes physically and emotionally handicapped students in both her morning and afternoon class who would spend the other half of their day with a resource teacher and receiving therapy services. She will be in a new school after seventeen years at McKenzie. The leaving of McKenzie is obviously very emotional for Lynn, and she became teary in describing her last days and the plaque given to her by the PTSA.

Lynn also discussed her frustration in trying to get special education certification and its cost. But it appears that she will pursue this in some way, so that she would be dually certified in elementary and special education.

CONCLUSION: WHAT IS SUCCESSFUL MAINSTREAMING?

Sue Bailey, mother of Peggy who is by all definitions a severely handicapped child, defined successful mainstreaming as "a handicapped child going to a public school, getting through everything all right." For a parent, the normalization aspect of attending a public school and "making it" is the central concern. "Everything being all right" seems to be fairly abstract and reflected in teacher report that such is the case. For professionals, however, the quality of the social experience is a primary concern. As Carol Cane speech therapist from the CP Center says,

> I was just thrilled how Lynn integrated Peggy into the mainstream of the group, the mainstream of the play activity. It was exciting for me to see because I've seen the opposite too. I have had children here that are "Mainstreamed, Integrated" and what are they doing? An aide is pulling the child out of class and taking the child into a cubicle and doing her one on one. That's not mainstreaming. She is not working in the classroom setting while the other children are going about their duties and responsibilities. That is not mainstreaming.
>
> Peggy was being mainstreamed. She had a chance to respond and participate at her level within her skill capacity with the other kids. They had to wait for her just as she would have to wait for another child that might be slower. It was a marvelous experience.

Lynn's major focus seems to be on the social integration of a child, being valued as a class member and participating in the social routine of the class.

> I think successful mainstreaming is the acceptance of differences and a sensitivity to helping when help is needed. I don't believe because a handicapped child is in my class means that people are going to like them; they must like them like any other kids. I am going to work at are they going to be able to get along in this world together right in this setting.

Comments by Gregg, a typical child in the class, demonstrate the success of Lynn's efforts. He told his mother that when he grew up he planned to marry Patty and he would wheel her down the aisle. Everything typical was possible for Patty, she just did them in the way she could do them.

The belief in common expectations and caring treatment is reflected in Lynn's efforts to normalize rather than highlight the participation of handicapped children in her class. At the same time she works actively to give children ways to communicate and participate jointly in classroom events, through her teaching children about each other's needs (Bliss symbols, physical therapy) through her choice of activities, and through the modeling of accepting and caring attitudes toward all the children. She struggles to balance her attention so it is paid equally to all in the class.

The professionals working with Lynn all responded to the question of what makes for successful mainstreaming by describing Lynn: "a committed teacher" (Bernice Bates);"a good teacher who cares" (Bill McPeak); "a dedicated teacher with the attitude, the acceptance, the genuine desire to succeed and to try new things" (Carol Cane). While they could list other components like human resources, administrative and parent support, teacher training, equipment and materials, lack of architectural barriers, they all came back to the significance of the teacher role. Bernice Bates, Director of Special Ed: "If you've got committed people, you can find a way to do anything." Bill McPeak's description of Lynn was an echo of this.

> She's really committed... For her mainstreaming children is an avocation, not even an avocation within a vocation. She's always wanting to learn, to know more, to do more, to try things out, to try things that are harder. These special kids are here because she sought them out."

From the data of this case study, one would conclude that the person is the major variable - committed to mainstreaming (and receiving support from some administrative level, I think) a teacher can create an accepting environment where children with special needs are accepted and integrated into the social fabric of the class.

CHAPTER 5

The Deaf Education Program In Sherwood Elementary School

Carol Berrigan

History of the Program

In September, 1974, the BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) Deaf Education Program began at Sherwood Elementary School, West Iroquois School District, Eastport, New York. Parents of deaf students, with the help of advocates, organized to create a local educational alternative for profoundly deaf children. Up to that point, the only option for these children were residential schools considering the distance from the Central City area. Several parents, some of whom were members of the task force created for seeking a local alternative, lived in the West Iroquois School District and approached the school district administrators. Finding them receptive, the parents worked through BOCES, whose representatives also became part of the task force. BOCES personnel formally requested to rent space from the district. They were welcomed.

The district began to prepare for the deaf education program. Sign language classes, as well as classes on nature and needs of the deaf were offered for faculty and hearing students at Sherwood. Among the participants of these classes were the Sherwood principal and assistant superintendent of the district.

Description of Sherwood School

The West Iroquois School District is west of Central City in a suburb which mushroomed after World War II. The typical home is a modest Cape Cod dwelling built in a small lot, twenty to thirty years ago. Sociologically, the neighborhood is lower middle to middle class.

Sherwood School consists of two connecting buildings, one built in 1962, the other in 1968. The original building is a sprawling one story structure and contains the primary classes (K-3), both regular and deaf, also the principal's office, gymnasium, cafeteria, and smaller rooms for speech therapy and counseling. To provide needed space for the burgeoning child population, the school doubled its size with a two story addition which is connected to the original building by wide corridors and contains the upper grades (including one deaf class) and the library. The school is situated on a long, curving drive, nestled in fields, and a quarter mile from the main thoroughfare.

Currently, there are 760 students,kindergarten through sixth grade, 32 of whom are deaf and in the BOCES program. The staff numbers 64, 14 of whom comprise the BOCES deaf education program. All the BOCES staff are women. The regular Sherwood staff are predominantly women. The principal is a man and there are eight men teachers on the fifth and sixth grade levels, as well as one man physical education teacher.

BOCES Deaf Education Staff

There are four BOCES classes for deaf students at Sherwood. In addition to the certified deaf education teacher, each class has an interpretutor whose primary functions are those of a teacher's aide within the deaf classroom, and as an interpretutor for individual deaf students when they are mainstreamed in regular classes. The auxilary BOCES staff includes three speech pathologists and one part time counselor. The BOCES deaf education coordinator is at Sherwood one day a week and at the junior and senior high schools on the other days. The supervisor of special education of BOCES visits the program periodically, twice in the three months I observed at the school.

The Four Deaf Classes

The four deaf classes are categorized as Kindergarten, Primary I (paralleling regular first grade), Primary II (second and third grades), and Elementary (fourth, fifth, sixth grades). The class sizes number five to eleven students. "Total communication" is the vehicle for language used in the entire program. By "total communication" is meant signing, finger spelling, oral language, lip reading, and body language, that is, all possible modes of communication.

Students are referred to the program by the Committee on the Handicapped of their home district. The tuition for each child, paid by the home district, is $9,198.

The classrooms, spacious and light with one long window wall, are identical to the regular classrooms. For the three primary classes, located in the original building, there is a lavatory between rooms, as well as connecting doors. The classroom space for five deaf students is identical to that for regular classes of twenty five students.

Kindergarten

There are five students in this class. One is mainstreamed in the regular kindergarten for the entire afternoon. All students receive daily individual sessions with the speech pathologist. The classroom is womb-like, sheltering the five students and their teacher. The room has attractive and lively decorations including a large playhouse, a gymnastic set, and a play store. The teacher is competent, caring, and very much in control. She conscientiously uses oral language while she signs and demands of her students that they use oral language simultaneously with their signing. The instruction is typical of regular kindergarten classes. The first period of the morning includes attendance, notations on the calendar, comments on the season and the weather, special events such as holidays and birthdays, and "show-and-tell". This is also the time for students to share their notebooks. Each student has a notebook which goes home at night with a note from the teacher, and returns in the morning with a note from the parents. It is used to bridge the gap between home and school and as a stimulator for conversation.

Primary I

In this class of six students, all are mainstreamed for physical education and two are mainstreamed for math. The morning routine is the same as in a regular first grade, that is, it includes attendance, calendar time, and individual anecdotes. The teacher uses oral language as she signs. She encourages the students to interact, to share an experience with each other.

The large classroom with its luxurious space is divided into areas of different emphases: language arts, math, arts and crafts.

Primary II

The ten students of this class (paralleling regular second and third grades) fall in the age range of eight to eleven years. The younger students are bright, capable, and academically successful. The older ones are having difficulty academically and become very distracted. Chronological peers of the older students who are more academically adept have passed on to the elementary class, which is located in the two-story wing. The teacher and the interpretutor have small groups of two or three students for reading and language arts, while others are engaged in independent study. All the students are mainstreamed in phys ed, art and music classes. Two of the groups are mainstreamed in second grade math. One student is fully mainstreamed, that is, all his classes are in regular classrooms.

He is moderate to severely hearing impaired and his school district referred him to the BOCES program in order for him to receive daily speech therapy.

Elementary

There are eleven students, ages ten to twelve, in this group. The teacher is relaxed, competent, and positive. The spacious room is a potpourri of maps, plants, charts of the human body, bookshelf dividers, and a large Victorian couch facing the windows. All students are mainstreamed in at least two regular classes: phys ed, art, math, social studies, and science. The students have individual daily schedules and enter and exit with efficiency and a sense of purpose. The teacher has three reading groups. One of the older students is in the slowest reading group. He came from a residential school for the deaf where finger spelling is the accepted mode of communication. He is very bright but has considerable difficulty in academic subjects. Total communication which is used in the BOCES program is helping him sharpen his academic skills.

Student Focus

A strategy used to assess mainstreaming of deaf students in regular classes was to focus on one student from each of the four deaf classes. I discussed the choice of student from each class with the teacher. "Typical" can be very arbitrarily defined. However, I attempted to find persons who were having a comfortable degree of success in regular classes but who were not the stellar achievers. The parents of the four students were notified. I readily agreed to cease observing a student who was becoming upset by my presence. In fact, no student did. All teachers wore microphones around their necks when instructing deaf students.

Each deaf student wears a phonic ear in the form of a small box that is strapped over the chest to amplify sound.

Ellen

Ellen attends the deaf kindergarten all morning and is mainstreamed all afternoon in the regular kindergarten. Mrs. M., the regular kindergarten teacher, noticed that Ellen wasn't comprehending all the instructions. Arrangements were made for the interpretutor to come into the regular kindergarten for the first half-hour of the afternoon to interpret for Ellen. It is at this time that Mrs. M. does her formal instruction. Ellen enjoys her afternoon class, volunteers answers to the teacher's questions to the class, and interacts with her classmates. As the class breaks up, the students sit at three tables. Mrs. M. speaks directly to Ellen. Ellen responds orally and with no difficulty. The boys on either side of her also talk to her in a normal tone and spontaneous conversation follows. However, when the regular teacher's aide comes to Ellen's side to comment on Ellen's work, the aide mouths her words with exaggeration, but making no sound, and gestures dramatically. This aide is not really seeing Ellen as an individual who happens to have some hearing impairment, but at the same time makes good use of her residual hearing; this aide has let deafness define Ellen.

In response to a question on Ellen's interaction in the classroom, Mrs. M. comments:

> Ellen needs a little more. She doesn't hear well. It takes her a little longer, but the interpretutor has made a big difference for Ellen. Ellen has not held the class up. The class is absolutely no different with her here. As a matter of fact, its been a wonderful experience for the other students. The parents of some hearing students expressed concern in the beginning that the class might be slowed down, but no longer.

Judy

Judy is six and is mainstreamed for math in a regular first grade. She is in Primary I of the Deaf Education Program. The teacher of the regular first grade is Mrs. S., a very gentle, loving, and competent instructor. For math lessons, Mrs. S. groups the desks in clusters of four. The other three students in Judy's cluster learned basic signs in order to be able to communicate with Judy. The interpretutor goes to math classes with Judy four of the five days and assists not only Judy, but others who may need help.

Responding to my question concerning any changes in her classroom due to the presence of a deaf student, Mrs. S. states:

> Academically, there was no change. Socially, yes. There was preparation for my class on deafness. Judy's teacher came in and talked about deafness. Some teachers are afraid to mainstream, but they don't know how easy it is. Some teachers fear that regular students will be denied. That's not so. The class is a richer experience.

Matthew and George

Mainstreamed in a regular second grade math class are Matthew, 8 years old, and George, 7 years old. Their deaf class is Primary II. The interpretutor goes with them every day. They have their own desks and feel very much a part of this regular math class. The second grade teacher, Mrs. H., is warm, friendly, and has an easy rapport with her students. Mrs. H. cheerfully puts the microphone around her neck. Matthew and George sit next to each other and in a cluster with two others. There is camaraderie between the two boys and the rest of the class. While students are doing individual work at their desks, they are helped by Mrs. H. The interpretutor helps the two deaf students, and hearing students as well.

Mrs. H. comments:

> Guess I was a little apprehensive at first but I've enjoyed the experience. Everyone benefits. The deaf kids are a part of this class.

Theresa

Theresa is in the Elementary deaf class, the oldest group. Twelve years old, she is mainstreamed in science, math, art, and phys ed. This is her last year at Sherwood. Next year she moves to the Junior High. In each of her mainstreamed classes, Theresa is joined by an interpretutor. Her science teacher, Mr. V., is friendly, affable, and has easy control in the classroom. There are twenty four hearing students in the class. The interpretutor stands about eight feet from Mr. V. and signs all his conversation as well as students' comments. The class is studying a unit on the human body. Theresa is completely absorbed and at one point volunteers an answer.

Mr. V. writes notes on the board, but sometimes he talks beyond the notes. The hearing students can write the extra notes, but Theresa is watching the interpretutor and there isn't time to write. An arrangement has been made whereby Theresa consults the notebooks of two students in the class to augment her own notes.

When asked about changes in his class due to the presence of a deaf student, Mr. V. responded:

> It's no different. Parents were afraid their kids would suffer. Nobody has suffered. The first few days the kids were distracted by the interpretutor signing in front of the room. After that they got used to it and they don't even notice it now. It's a good experience for everyone to have handicapped kids mainstreamed. Teachers think it's going to be tough or disruptive. All they have to do is try it.

Views of Teachers on Mainstreaming

The deaf education teachers and the regular education teachers had differing views on mainstreaming. I found a separateness between the two groups which extended even to the teachers' lunch room where they sat at separate tables on the eight occasions I ate there. On an individual basis, there were friendly exchanges between a deaf education teacher and a regular education teacher. But even these were at best secondary relationships as compared to the primary relationships of teachers and staff within each program.

In my interview with the principal at the end of my observations at the school, he commented:

> It would be good to have more informal contact with deaf ed and my teachers. Through informal ways I think there would be better mainstreaming.
>
> Observer:
>
> What do you mean by 'informal'?
>
> I mean it doesn't have to be some formal inservice. Informal - day to day contacts - would break down barriers between deafness and my teachers, when individuals come together. The important thing is how they interrelate.

And from a deaf education teacher:

> We're guests in the school. We're a different program. We're BOCES. We have separate workshops frequently. Sometimes others are resentful when we have days off. The school is cliquey. We stand apart.

Regular Education Teachers

At Sherwood, mainstreaming in the academic areas is completely voluntary. The regular classroom teachers make known to the deaf education teachers their willingness to include a deaf student in their classes. Currently there are ten classroom teachers who are mainstreaming deaf students. However, from the beginning of the BOCES program, teachers in such special areas as art, and physical education, were expected to mainstream deaf students. This stirred resentment among some of the special area teachers as evidenced in the following remarks:

> I'm pretty bitter about how the deaf kids were dumped on us. We were told we HAD to have THEM in our classes. After a couple years of this the special area teachers revolted. We demanded some orientation, some instruction on how to teach the deaf. We put our foot down. No more deaf kids in our classes until we had some preparation.

And from another of the special area teachers:

> Three years ago the other phys ed teacher, the art teacher and myself felt we weren't doing things right. Everybody was suffering. Deaf kids and normal kids. We said no more mainstreaming until we got some help, some instruction, some ideas on how to deal with deaf kids. They set up a course for us. Right here at the school. Somebody came from S.U. and team-taught the course with the supervisor of deaf ed here. Boy, it was great! We got so much out of it. Part of the course was to visit three schools for the deaf - Hempstead, Levittown, and Oceanside. Wow! We learned something there. We found that we could do much better in our phys ed classes for the deaf kids. Because we were expecting so much from the kids, we got it. We observed tennis instruction. Two instructors to eight kids. High School. The kids weren't even holding the racquet right. Now with that ratio of kids to teachers you could at least expect the right hold on a tennis racquet. Then they were playing very simple games with the kids. Talking down to them. Expecting little. All children grow. But they grow much more slowly if you're expecting little. The one thing I saw that was really good was swimming. It was one to one and the kids were doing great. I felt that the gym classes were limited because they were dealing with the same type kids. If you deal with normal kids, when you get kids with problems, you pull them up by their bootstraps. Now I got deaf kids who come out for after-school gym club. They're like any other kid.

By far the most negative reaction I heard during my visits at Sherwood was from another of the phys ed teachers. I was observing a hockey game among sixth graders during a phys ed class where three deaf students are mainstreamed. An interpretutor stood on the sidelines and signed the teacher's instructions, as well as teammates' comments.

First, the teacher selected two captains who lined up the teams alternately. Sam and Billy, deaf students, were among the first selected and started the game on first string. Both boys are scrappy and competent players, and enjoyed the game. The third deaf student, Theresa, is not as adept, and played second string. She was teased by Billy who playfully signed to her in the midst of the din, "you're blind," then pantomimed an old person leaning on a cane. It was all done in good humor and completely missed by the teacher. There was great enthusiasm and a good spirit. I observed that all three deaf students were accepted and simply were part of the class. I commented on this to the teacher who retorted:

> The deaf kids stick together. There's no natural mainstreaming. The hearing kids ignore them.

However, I found from other staff members that the negativeness of the teacher was typical of her reactions to hearing as well as deaf students and there was conjecturing that this could be attributed to a personal crisis in her life. She did not appear to influence other staff because the usual reaction from the regular education staff to mainstreaming indicated not only an acceptance but a belief that it was an enrichment of their classes. The comments from a regular ed first grade teacher echo those sentiments:

> Prior to Judy (a deaf student) entering my class, her deaf ed teacher came in and talked to the class about deafness. This brought a whole new dimension to my normal students' ordinary life. Judy's presence has given the class vitality.

From the music teacher:

> There's no magic in teaching the deaf kids. They can enjoy and learn music in their own way. Of course, if you were to tell any music teacher to teach deaf kids they would probably be horrified. But I practice-taught in this school three years ago and found it very enjoyable. Then I was lucky there was an opening and I've taught here two years now.

From the art teacher, in whose class there was spontaneity and a spirit of freedom among the students:

> The deaf kids fit right in. They're kids like all kids. Why, I don't need an interpretutor for this class. We (three deaf students and teacher) don't need a third party in order to communicate.

One of the deaf students in the art class has difficulty with the academic curriculum. However, he is very creative and talented. He is more alive in this class than I have seen him elsewhere. He is not only accepted but cited for his artistic ability by teacher and students alike.

From one of the phys ed teachers:

> The deaf kids have difficulties with concepts. Figurative language is almost impossible. It is terribly difficult for the deaf to attach other interpretations to a word. For example: drive (drive car, drive: ambition, etc.). Mainstreaming has forced deaf kids to go at a faster pace than you would get in a self-contained school.
>
> Some deaf kids are selfish because they've been indulged by their parents. For example, they want to be always first in line, and here they had to learn to share. Here they've learned the social graces as well as academics. They became more mature, we did them a favor by not giving them their way.
>
> The first year we had a square dancing unit as part of phys ed. We wondered: Could the deaf kids do it? This would depend on some assistance from the hearing world. The phys ed teacher worked out the calls with an interpreter. The deaf kids loved it and did excellently.

Noting that some teachers have not volunteered to take a deaf student in their classes, I asked the principal if there was a certain type of instructor willing to mainstream deaf students. He responded:

> No. There are no special characteristics in people or in teaching styles. Well, maybe the personality of individuals has something to do with it. Maybe there is a special personality to the individual who is willing to mainstream. It has got to be a person who will share, who will talk, who will empathize.

Deaf Education Teacher

The deaf education teachers were unanimous in citing academic achievement as the most important criterion for mainstreaming deaf students. The degree of deafness or the facility in oral speech were not major issues in the projected success of a mainstreamed student.

One deaf education teacher discussed a student:

> George is profoundly deaf and not oral, but is super bright. He is my youngest student and knows the world and the countries of the world. He has a developed sense of geography. Right now he goes to a regular math class, but he could be fully integrated.

The deaf ed teachers have a sense of accomplishment when their students can be mainstreamed in a regular classroom for at least one subject. But these deaf students are THEIRS. And deaf education has "specialness." I recorded the following remarks from discussions with deaf education teachers:

> If I were a regular classroom teacher not qualified to teach deaf kids, I would sure be resentful if one were dumped in my class.
>
> I see my personal role in mainstreaming as taking as much off the regular teacher as possible. You have to make it as easy as possible.
>
> Regular teachers are not trained. I wouldn't do it if I weren't trained. Why, we've spent four years in special training.
>
> In the future, those teachers will have to have everyone in class-neurologically impaired, emotionally disturbed-with no support services. We don't force any of our own deaf kids on them.

Two of the staff had previously worked at the New York State School for the Deaf, Hempstead, New York.

> It was much easier to teach in Hempstead. The State School has tons of materials...All kinds of money...All kinds of resources...physical education, sensory education...audiologist,

> psychologist, dance instructor for the deaf, etc. etc.. It was nice to have all those people in deaf ed to talk with. Everyone was skilled. I miss the camaraderie. A problem for the school for the deaf was that the staff loses sight of expectations for the deaf kids. Also the staff begins to take all the resources for granted and doesn't use them creatively. I think I do a better job teaching the deaf at Sherwood because I was teaching in a deaf school.
>
> Observer: If you had a deaf child, where would you send this child to school?
>
> A residential deaf school. Except that I would move to the city where there was a residential school so my child could commute every day. The kids here at Sherwood don't have enough deafness surrounding them. Many kids here suffer because there is not enough for a deaf world. If this program were ideal, I would want it for my child.
>
> Observer: How would this program be ideal?
>
> If the School for Deaf were in Freeport and was near a school district where kids could go back and forth, they wouldn't have to suffer. Non-academic subjects would be shared. Kids would be integrated to some degree. The expectations in the deaf school would be heightened.
>
> Observer: How would you describe the school at Hempstead?
>
> I feel the atmosphere at Hempstead is better for deaf children. At Sherwood they only have each other, and that is a limited number. I see very little social integration. I think this may be damaging to the social development of deaf children.

Following are remarks of a teacher describing her six year old student who is mainstreamed the entire afternoon in a regular kindergarten:

> She has normal or possibly a little above normal intelligence, is spirited, uses her residual hearing very well, and is oral. Her speech is excellent. When we mainstreamed her in the afternoon she wasn't doing very well. There is much language in the kindergarten. It's a good place to see how the kid will progress with mainstreaming. I sent the interpretutor for one half hour every day to interpret the information and procedures which the kindergarten teacher gives in the first half hour of her class. Now my student is functioning 100% and not her previous 60%.

> Observer: The student now functions at 100% with just a half hour of service from the interpretutor! What do you envision as the ideal for this student's education?
>
> She should stay in the deaf ed program right through high school so she'll get every opportunity to absorb all the information she can.

The Administration

A symbol of this school's commitment to deaf education is the large poster of the fingerspelling alphabet that greets a visitor walking into the administrative offices. When I commented on the poster to the principal, he responded:

> You'd be amazed at how many kids, parents, and visitors begin practicing fingerspelling while they're waiting.

Sherwood Principal

The principal laments the separateness of the two programs and sees this separation intensifying with the most recent BOCES administrative personnel:

> Each year my involvement has been less and less. BOCES takes increasingly more responsibility for the administration. I wish there were more sharing. The BOCES teachers have different schedules for holidays, vacations, etc.. Sometimes our teachers are resentful that BOCES teachers not only get our holidays because the school is closed but others as well. The BOCES program closes one week before ours does in June. So they have the luxury of finishing their reports, doing IEP's, and cleaning their rooms while our teachers are still teaching all day.
>
> Almost exclusively the BOCES supervisor does the decision making for the program. When the program first began there was more sharing and openness. Now there is more, if not complete, domination by BOCES. They share very little with us. We are really ignored as far as decision making is concerned.

In response to a question about inservice for the regular classroom teachers on educating deaf students, the principal reported:

> In the beginning of the program we had inservice workshops on deafness, working very cooperatively with the BOCES personnel. In the last two years there has been none. And no one on my staff has expressed a need for inservice to me. My total staff is not involved. Some feel uncomfortable with deaf kids and choose not to be involved. Some also feel uncomfortable about having another adult--the interpretutor--in their room while they're teaching. Also there are no special funds to pay for good inservice workshops.
>
> Observer: What could you see as further commitment on your part to the deaf education program?
>
> First, providing release time for my non-mainstreaming teachers to observe the deaf ed classes and mainstreamed classes. Second, to identify and give public recognition to good examples of mainstreaming in the school. And third, to regularly visit the deaf ed classes myself.
>
> Visitors come from all over to observe our program. And do you know what? Outsiders know more about our program than our own regular teachers. One other thing: I don't understand why some school districts pay BOCES to send some kids to this program when the kids are completely mainstreamed in our school. They should keep their kids in their local schools with maybe an itinerant teacher for consultation.

BOCES Administrators

Parents of deaf students in the program were extremely critical of the BOCES Special Education Director and the Deaf Education Supervisor to the extent that a letter-writing campaign to the BOCES Superintendent was organized to discourage the granting of tenure to the BOCES Special Education Director. However, the Director was tenured. The Director described the program:

> We have a quality program. We are a vendor of services, not an institution. We must keep the program more vital and innovative than your average school district could. If a school district or combined school districts can give as good a program cheaper, then they deserve to do it. I'd like to see a voucher system. Have this go private and parents pay directly with vouchers. The pressure on us keeps the program vital.

> The original perspective of this program was an alternative to the state schools. In the cascade of services BOCES offers one option. BOCES offers self-contained classes as well as integrative classes. What we do not have are resource rooms. New York State law prohibits resource rooms by BOCES. We try to do something better for school districts without programs. We've got to have good programs to make it attractive for school districts to pay BOCES the money. We've got to do it not only better but also at a price that school districts couldn't do themselves. We can't do all things better. There are two school districts who found that kids did better in their local schools with an itinerant teacher.

The supervisor visits the Sherwood program one day a week. Sherwood was the first of three schools to have the deaf education program. (The other schools are Eastport Junior High and Westport Senior High.) For the two years that Sherwood was the only school, the supervisor was an integral part of the program five days a week. The first supervisor was a certified deaf education teacher as well as a speech pathologist. The present supervisor, a speech pathologist, has no background in deaf education.

The deaf education staff commented on the supervision of the Sherwood program:

> The supervisor is here only one day a week because she has other programs to supervise. She doesn't know the kids. She doesn't know the teachers.
>
> The school is less receptive now than it was in the beginning. We started small, with two teachers, the supervisor, and a teacher's aide. The supervisor was the speech therapist and she knew each student; she went to all the regular classrooms and did public relations work. She volunteered to go to classrooms and talk about deafness and went into many, many classes. She ran inservice training each Fall before classes began, for anyone who wanted to come. She taught sign classes and several teachers participated.
>
> The program is much bigger. When we started, the supervisor was not only an administrator but could sub for a teacher if one was sick, because she was also a certified deaf ed teacher. She did inservice and P.R. with regular teachers.
>
> All teachers don't know that they could use the interpretutor who goes with the deaf kid as an aide, a team teacher, a disciplinarian for other kids as well. The supervisor should go around and do P.R. work.

Personal Insights

Least Restrictive Environment

From the beginning, I have been somewhat familiar with the Deaf Education Program at Sherwood. The teachers in the past, as well as the current staff impress me as creative, competent, and caring. The program, begun as an alternative to residential schools, was a radical step at the time of its inception.

Comments from regular teachers who have mainstreamed have been uniformly positive about the experience. When asked why some of their colleagues avoid mainstreaming, their responses were:

> I think there is a lack of preparation for mainstreaming. Teachers are fearful. It has come too fast. Teachers are afraid of physically handicapped students because they fear failure. Some have refused because of fear. They don't know how easy it is. But teachers can find other students. I group my desks in clusters of four. The other three in my deaf student's cluster learned basic signs to help her. Some teachers fear that regular students will be denied.

Others, particularly the special area teachers, (art, phys ed, music) who have had all the deaf students and therefore more familiarity, stressed the "sameness in kids." Where no one of the regular ed teachers mentioned it, I observed a pattern of possessiveness among the deaf ed teachers, which, I believe is inhibitive to the deaf student's integration. Also, among the deaf ed teachers, is an attitude of "specialness" in their training that sets them apart.

Momentum has gathered, and more and more regular ed teachers are gaining enough confidence to accept disabled students. As one teacher said, "My kids learned more because of the deaf students. But this news hasn't got around yet."

Yet, the ultimate question is, "Can profoundly deaf students be mainstreamed in their neighborhood schools?" I began my observational visits to Sherwood pondering that question with great ambivalence. I now am no longer ambivalent. My answer is "yes".

In the Fall of 1980, the parents of a six year old deaf student in Primary I requested that their daughter attend her neighborhood school. (the family was featured in a recent newspaper article.) The mother was reported as saying:

> The family was satisfied at first with the 'deaf education' provided by BOCES staff at Sherwood. As time went on, we saw that our daughter needed more of a challenge. We felt that challenge would be offered if our daughter was able to attend classes with children with normal hearing. Unfortunately, the school personnel did not agree and so there was a hearing before the Committee on the Handicapped. A hearing officer was called in. He recommended that our daughter be placed in her neighborhood school with help from an interpretutor and resource teacher. This was rejected by the district because officials said there was no specialist for the deaf available and the district couldn't provide one for a single pupil. To this we say that the school district is paying to send our daughter to another district and the cost of hiring a resource teacher would be less.

The parents have been forced to sue their school district based on the violations of federal law which provides for an educational setting in "the least restrictive setting". They hope that this litigation "will benefit other parents who are faced with the same problems."

In recent weeks I had lunch with two women and their teenage daughters who are deaf. Both these parents were among the leaders who struggled for the creation of the deaf education program at Sherwood as an alternative to the residential schools which their daughters previously attended. They were both very pleased with Sherwood and now their daughters are in high school. One of these mothers, both of whom militantly support the above mentioned parents who are suing their home school district, stated:

> If I knew then what I know now I would have insisted with my school district that my daughter go to her neighborhood school with her siblings and neighbors. She has very limited ties where we live. Her peers in the BOCES high school program all live many miles from each other which makes it difficult to socialize with her high school friends. It's too late for my daughter, but I strongly support the younger families.

Inservice Training for Regular Education Teachers

A common thread among the regular ed teachers was their stressing the necessity of inservice training on deaf education. The physical ed teacher stated, "We rebelled and refused to have deaf kids in our classes until they gave us some inservice."

Another teacher:

> I was among the first teachers to mainstream, and in the beginning we had a general meeting on sign language and deafness. This might be a good thing to do every year. I would say that the essential points to stress are (1) attitude of teachers, and (2) preparation of the hearing students.

From a special area teacher:

> I would say that attitude is the biggest factor. If you can open people's heads to seeing that kids are the same whether they're deaf, blind, or purple, it's half the battle. But we've got to keep plugging at our teachers. They're scared that they're going to look like failures. You've got to show them that these kids are not THOSE kids but OUR kids. This can't be one year on, one year off. There has got to be regular inservice.

Repeatedly, I found regular and deaf ed teachers using the expression, "There has got to be more P.R.". They felt strongly that teachers who were unfamiliar with deafness had to be coached, had to be informed, had to be encouraged, and had to meet deaf adults so they could imagine the potential of deaf students.

Finally, the words of one of the deaf ed teachers who I believe could be as effective in teaching her colleagues as she is in instructing her deaf students:

> I love teaching deaf kids. In them I find great imagination. It's almost as though their imaginations are more fertile because they're not encumbered by all the stimuli that hearing people have as a daily diet. I find that so often normal kids fit into the mold. They conform to the culture and as a citizen. Deaf kids don't have the mold. They have so much to teach the world.

CHAPTER 6

IF MAINSTREAMING IS THE ANSWER, WHAT IS THE QUESTION:

The Puzzle of Integrating a High School Class of Autistic Students

Phil Ferguson

As picture puzzles go, it is a large one. Matt works on it intently. He stands at a table in the back of the classroom and shifts his weight, back and forth, from one leg to the other. Occasionally he mumbles something inaudibly. The jigsaw puzzle box lid with the picture of a fall landscape leans against the wall at the back of the table. In front of it looks as though the same picture had fallen, shattered into hundreds of cardboard shards. Oranges, yellows, browns, all of the autumnal hues splotched about on odd-shaped pieces of curves and knobs.

Matt stares at the just begun jigsaw puzzle. He picks up one piece and turns it quickly round and round with his fingers. His actions seem to speak with an eloquent ambivalence which Matt cannot say in words. "It must fit together. The piece belongs somewhere. Or is my persistence misplaced? I've fit so few together so far. But I have fit a few. I found a corner there, and several pieces of sky. More will come."

As I watch his silent struggle, I find myself thinking more about Matt. He is one of six students in the class. All are labeled as severely autistic. How do they fit together? There are over a thousand other students at the high school which Matt and his classmates attend. Where and how do they hook up with Matt? Then there are Matt's teacher, the principal, the rest of the faculty. How do they color Matt's life? Are all of the pieces there? How much of Matt's puzzle has been finished? And where the hell is the picture on the box lid showing what it should look like when done?

Perhaps I have belabored the puzzle analogy. It suggests to me a useful perspective, however, for understanding how the integration of Matt and his classmates is and is not working. This class of six severely autistic teenagers is new to Hutton High School this year. It is the first time that students as severely cognitively disabled as Matt have attended Hutton. Throughout my observations of this class and interviews with those associated with it, the one persistent theme was "We're not finished here, yet." Conclusions were tentative. Progress was juxtaposed with new and remaining problems. Remembering how things had been before was common. There was a sense of incompleteness about the class and its integration into the flow of the high school. The incompleteness appeared more basic than the normal efforts to fine tune a program while maintaining its current structure and organization. Agreement on the final goal was not clearly present. No one seemed sure they were all working on the same puzzle.

All of this makes an evaluation of Matt's class more difficult. The deficiencies in the nature and degree of integrated programming for Matt and the others are easily discovered. Mel, the class' teacher, quickly acknowledges them. But a snapshot judgement of the program's success or failure is too limited. The transitional, groping character of the program make the history, the process and the future as important as the details of Matt's day at the time I observed. How the people at Hutton High are solving the puzzle is more informative than how much of the solution they have found.

Pieces of the Puzzle

The Students and Teachers

You need a feeling for who Matt, his classmates, and his teachers are before their past and future can be appreciated. This requires more than a one paragraph description of the class. You can't ask the students how they feel about their new school, or the typical students who sometimes stare in the halls, or the new requirements and risks. You can't ask because they can't say. But you can imagine how it must be puzzling for them, too.

Occasionally, as I watched the students - in the lunch room, a shop class, or just walking down the long corridors at Hutton - I would be reminded that it wasn't inanimate shapes that adults were moving about to see who fit where. These puzzle pieces were fitting themselves in, finding room for their own odd behavioral bumps and curves. We never just "mainstream". We mainstream students, people. They need to be seen and felt as helping to find their own solutions.

Mel and John, the teacher and teacher's assistant respectively, are important too, of course. Both are short, unassuming men. And the class does depend on them for much of its tone and structure. Their planning and performance at the high school has been crucial to the program's success. But they can speak for themselves when I describe the history.

The six students in class range between fourteen and seventeen years old. All of the students have been taught by Mel for several years (last year was an exception). He knows first hand how each of them has changed. Mel describes his students as being in the lower half of the functional range for autistic children in general.

> It's a pretty low functioning class. I've certainly worked with kids labeled autistic who were much higher functioning. Lorna is the highest functioning student in this class. If there is such a thing as an average autistic kid, then Lorna would probably be at that level.

Lorna is a tall, buxom black girl with a toothy smile almost always on her face. Although she says very little spontaneously, she seems to understand almost everything said to her. Along with Matt, she is the most independent and observant of the students. During the times I observed, for instance, Lorna was the only student to come over to me and say "hi". It was only once, and in the middle of gym class, but it was the only verbal communication any of the students initiated with me.

Lorna often finishes the work samples used in class with time to spare. On such occasions her favorite activity is listening to music on the record player at the front of the room. She will go to the phonograph, choose an album, and put it on, all independently. Occasionally, Mel has to remind her to put the needle down. Mel laughingly mentioned how they are trying to broaden Lorna's taste in music. She would customarily sort through a stack of ten or twelve albums and always choose the same one: The Platters. While I was there, Lorna's taste, to Mel's relief, had expanded to also include the "Shaft" movie music.

Lorna does have some of the noticeable autistic behaviors. One hand is often at her ear and she will rock while making quiet noises. Her smile has that frozen quality of an expression unchanged regardless of the situation.

Almost eighteen, Matt is the oldest member of the class. He is a good sized (5-10 or so), well-built, handsome fellow. In many ways his overt behavior is the least bizarre or noticeably different of the class. Matt is a hard worker to the point of compulsiveness. He becomes noticeably bothered if asked to switch activities for some reason before a task is completed. Matt is also the only student who still lives in an institution, a fact which is no small source of irritation to Mel.

> You want to see what an institution can do to a capable person, Matt's a perfect example. He is so reluctant to do things spontaneously. He's learned not to do anything unless told. Sometimes he'll want to do something so bad, and it will be something perfectly harmless like stopping in the hall for a drink of water. But instead of just doing it he'll just get agitated and look for me or John. Or in class he might start rocking, but never call out for attention. He'll just sit there and get frustrated until one of us notices. It's really a shame. He's such a reliable and capable kid. It's almost like you have to force him to enjoy himself.

If given the direction, Matt can go independently anywhere he needs to in the school. Mel, for example, often gives Matt the key to the classroom and lets him go back early from lunch. Not a short walk. As with Lorna, Matt understands almost everything said to him. He also has some good expressive language, but speaks so softly that you can barely hear him.

With his skills, ability to observe and imitate, and generally reticent behavior, Matt has been the easiest student for Mel to integrate into several typical classes.

Bob is a tall skinny boy who is sixteen years old. He is the quietest of the class, as far as making sounds. Bob's face is usually expressionless. He has few of the odd perseverative hand movements of some of the other students.

Bob counts out loud with a slow, deliberate speech that needs to be cued often. Unlike Lorna and Matt, Bob does not seem to have any sight word skills. And Bob is less adept than Lorna and Matt at learning from models.

An example of the comparative learning rates occurred once while I was watching the class in the weight training room. More on a whim than anything else, John decided to try and get Matt and Bob to jump rope. John modeled how and then had the two boys try. After a few false starts, Matt was making slow but successful efforts at swinging the rope around and timing his jump. Bob, on the other hand, was less successful: not jumping, forgetting to swing the rope, and other mishaps. One envisioned Matt being able to jump rope fairly soon if the task was worked on. For Bob the complexity of the action seemed much more baffling. One sensed that several, much more structured steps would need to be established first. But, while taking longer, learning the skill still seemed possible.

Fred is the only student who still demonstrates any aggressive behavior. The behavior is episodic in nature, but is more troublesome because the incidents occur most often outside the classroom. Mel was working hard during my visits to isolate the incidents so as to better determine what precipitated them.

I should not exaggerate this. Fred is not a large boy, even for fourteen. And the episodes in question consist mainly of striking out, kicking or hitting, but not with vicious or really dangerous force. As Mel described it:

> Actually, you see worse stuff in the halls here every day. People beating on each other. And that's between friends. The trouble is Fred isn't selective about who he strikes out at when he does it. It's more dangerous for him, really, in that he might pick the wrong person some time.

Fred does all right, usually, as long as he and his hands are both kept occupied. When he is 'tuning out', as John referred to it, Fred is calm but flicks his fingers in front of his eyes, and chuckles. If not reminded by John or Mel, Fred often walks down the halls this way. He stares at his fingers, laughs, seems oblivious to where he is going, but seldom runs into anyone even when the halls are crowded.

Fred has some of the best expressive language skills, but often does not use them well. What speech therapists call "pragmatic speech" is where Fred falls down. You can hear him at his desk carrying on an elaborate, articulate conversation, but completely irrelevant to the time and place. "Go to bed and be quiet. Goddamn it, go to bed". At other times, in the cafeteria line for one, Fred can tell the server what food he wants, respond to questions, and do it all in very understandable speech. In short, Fred is probably the most unpredictable of the students.

Danielle and Josh are the two lowest functioning students in class. They are both fourteen but are even smaller than Fred. Their desks are the only two in the class that are placed close together. While the other four students often work independently on the assembly tasks, Josh and Danielle usually need Mel or John with them to keep them working on their less complicated jobs.

Perhaps because I remembered similar feelings of my own as a teacher, I think I detected a slightly greater pride and pleasure in Mel with the progress made by Josh and Danielle over the years he has known them. The sense is not that Josh and Danielle's relative status has changed to surpass the other students. Rather, it is the teacher's instinct that "With these two, the small gains are even more cherished". One's work with them, and their own efforts are even more crucial, not less so, because of the starting point.

One afternoon, after Danielle had missed her bus, leaving Mel to take her home on his own, he recounted their history together.

> When I first got her she was straight out of Troy (a large, infamous state institution for the retarded), and it was incredible. It was literally like a wild animal in a cage. She never stood still. She was constantly running around the room, screaming, pulling huge clumps of her hair out. No communication at all, no toileting skills, no eye contact, no eating skills. (This was about seven years ago.)

Mel told of a similar if less dramatic change in Josh. It was after a scene in class where Josh had spit on the floor and been taken by Mel through an elaborate clean-up procedure.

> You have to understand what Josh's behavior used to be like. Three things characterized his acting out. He would take his shoes off, scratch and spit. Now we have him down to just spitting. So there really has been a lot of progress. Some times he'll go two or three days straight without spitting at all.

Now, Danielle lives with foster family and is a slender attractive girl who is eager to please. And Josh, who has always lived at home, is usually mild mannered as Mel says. A little whining sometimes, but no real resistance unless the situation is new or unpleasant (e.g., barber's clippers). With both, only remnants of the former wild behavior can still be seen.

Mel and John communicate with Danielle with signs. I counted around five or six which Danielle used regularly. She understands fifteen or twenty. She is happy, curious, and occasionally manipulative. Mel frets sometimes that the skills Danielle has aren't used at home as much as they could be. "She spends a lot of time just watching T.V., pulling her hair, and sucking her thumb". But Mel also feels that the setting is an incomparable improvement over Danielle's institutional life. He works with the foster mother in a low pressure way.

Josh's mom has been much more involved over the years. Mel's concern, in fact, is that the mother may be at the point where a break is necessary. There are several other children at home, and the fatigue of years of attention to Josh's needs and demands is beginning to crush instead of just erode the mother's energy. Josh is now spending weekends at a group home near his family. He is scheduled for a full time switch in the near future.

In class, Josh is the moper, the "sad sack". He moves slowly, droopy-eyed, through the activities. Almost any physical activity is viewed with disdain by Josh. Mel and John push him to exert himself. When allowed as a reward, Josh likes most of all to play with a set of keys, quietly entranced with their jangling and shapes. Mel says, "At least I have him 'self-stiming' for something I want, rather than for just anything."

The History

Students are not the only people who change and develop over time. So do teachers. Even administrators. And the programs that all three of these groups are associated with have stories to tell as well. At least, the good ones do. The history of how Matt's class came to be at Hutton is also vital to understanding its problems and its strengths. What has happened to Mel and the students over the past five years, and what has happened at Hutton High before they arrived constitute a large part of this puzzle.

"Discovering" Autism

Six years ago there were no students like Matt and Lorna, much less Josh and Danielle, at Hutton. There were no such students at any public school in town. Mel and several of his current students were just beginning their association in the local ARC school. Mel talked with me at length about how the changes started. He tells the story better than I could.

> It started at the ARC in 1975. What happened was that I and several other teachers at the school who had what you would now call TMR classes repeatedly told the administration that we each had one or two kids who showed autistic characteristics. Usually we had ten or twelve kids in each class, and the autistic kids just weren't benefiting from being in that large a group. So we got together and got some parents together and put a little pressure on the administration, and also on the county, because that was where the money came from.

> Well, they got the class set and asked me if I would be the teacher. I didn't know anything about autism then but I said 'Okay, I'll try it.' I thought maybe we could start off and get somehwere with it. Unfortunately, the psychologist they had hired to help start the program left before September. So come Fall, I was really groping. I kept pushing the ARC to fill the position, to get someone in there with me who had some experience with autistic kids. Finally they got Danny.

Danny is an important person in the development of the class. Both he and Mel came over to the public school system later. Danny remains a consultant for Mel's class as a school psychologist. He visits the class one morning a week, and Mel still uses him for support and advice. Their working relationship seems much closer than that regularly seen between a teacher and the school psychologist.

Danny does not look or talk like a typical school psychologist. He has long hair and a full unkept black beard. His attire tends to be very casual, running toward flannel shirts and blue jeans or cords. He is a very political person. When I asked him what he would look for if he were hiring a new teacher for disabled kids he answered, "idealogy first". Danny sees education as, most importantly, a part of a larger political philosophy.

Mel described how his association with Danny began:

> The ARC didn't want to hire Danny because of the way he looked. But I was on the interview committee and said, 'Look, if this guy has some of the answers that we need, then don't worry about what he looks like. Close your eyes and hire him.' So it worked out well. Danny was able to give me structure I needed. When I look back on it now, it wasn't much at all. But it helped us to get through the first year and then we built on that. I guess the big thing we did that year was to toilet train all the kids.

Making the Jump to Public School

Mel's program, with several of the same students he has now as well as others, continued at the private, segregated ARC school for three years. Mel tried to refer some of the students out to their home districts but kept getting rejections. ARC was the "dumping ground" for the severely autistic kids and the separate school districts kept refusing the referrals because they lacked any programs for those students.

Danny and Mel finally approached the big city school district with the proposal to start a public school program. To Mel's surprise, the school district was receptive to the idea. He attributes the receptivity, ironically, to the pressure created by another private, but integrated, program for autistic children which had started the year after his class. The school, called Open School, was affiliated with the University in the city and at that time had, to Mel's mind, students from a different, more educated middle class background. Equally important, the Open School only went up to age seven or eight. After that, other programs would have to be found for the children attending the school. Mel gave me his perception of what happened.

> The thing was, the parents of the class over at ARC were not very vocal. Except for Josh's mother, they were pretty much people who were having a real hard time making ends meet. They just didn't have it all together. And they weren't the kind of people who were going to go out and push for services. But over at Open School you had a group of parents who were really gung ho. People who were really going to push to see that their kids got the right kind of program after they left Open School. Well, I think the district was really intimidated by the Open School model of full integration, and by these parents who weren't going to take no for an answer. So I think they decided 'Well, before we go whole hog with this model, let's get a self contained class started first.'
>
> Of course, as with most programs in this district, it was thrown together at the last minute. They hired Danny in July and me in August, 1978. We quickly got our act together and just moved the class over to The John School (an elementary school).

Mel and Danny made efforts over the next two years at The John School to decrease gradually the amount of segregation their self contained class still had. The classroom was moved nearer the older grades after first being in among the younger students. Four of the six students now with Mel at Hutton were in this class at The John School. So even then, the students were too old to be in an elementary school. But, as Danny put it, "We were trying to infiltrate a building, to get more and more acceptance."

The '79-'80 school year saw another big change for Mel and for the school. Given the history, it has relevance to understanding Mel's style and procedure. And it is not without irony. Mel tells it.

> See, in '79 was when they brought the Open School model over to The John School. The only trouble was that the teacher who came over from Open School, too, had some real problems.
>
> She had no trouble with the special kids, well, nothing she couldn't have dealt with. But she couldn't handle the regular street-wise kids. Open School had typical kids, but they weren't typical kids. At least not the typical kids you get mixed in at The John School. The kids just really intimidated her and sort of took over the class. It was sad. She had pictured herself in that sort of role and it just didn't work out. She had to leave just for her own mental health.
>
> So anyway, the principals asked me to take over this integrated class. It was a big change because I had never worked with regular kids before. So anyway, I knew what was going on in the class, because I had been in there to observe. I went in with a real tough guy attitude to regain control of the class. And I was at least able to make it go for a year.

Hutton at Last: A Matter of Principle

One can easily imagine Mel having stayed with the integrated class. It was a model program, perhaps the first of its kind in the country. And Mel had made it go for a year. But the development of the self-contained class was also continuing.

Against the background of the previous five years, it is easier to appreciate Danny's and Mel's efforts at last to get the class established at Hutton. It also becomes increasingly clear how despite a soft spoken, pragmatic style, Mel is able to discern and use the politics of a situation if he thinks it will help put more of the puzzle together.

The proposals for a self contained class of severely autistic students at Hutton were made in the Spring of 1980. Mel and Danny had seen major progress in school district services to autistic children over the last three years. Indeed, they had been active participants in that process. The move to Hutton was seen as a natural and needed continuation of the process.

However, events at Hutton had also changed during the recent past. To understand the collaboration of the staff at Hutton with Mel and the special education administrators, it is useful also to mention how special education had expanded at Hutton.

One of the earlier case studies for this project has examined the recent history of Hutton changing character (Bogdan, "Walk Across That Stage"). I will only summarize that description here, and add some further details mentioned during my observations.

In common with most schools over the past five years, Hutton has been fighting an increasingly difficult battle against declining enrollment. And at the same time as the total enrollment decreased, the percentage of Black students from lower income families increased. A former priority and pride in the high academic achievements of its students has of necessity been replaced by a pressure to serve the different needs of a different type of student. Discipline, vocational training, remedial classes, racial tolerance and balance: these became the new focus of Hutton High. It has been a vicious circle. Hutton's staff and faculty want to maintain or regain an image of academic quality so as not to lose more of the students from professional, upwardly mobile families to private schools and suburbs. But the school must also serve an expanding non-academic student population, if just to maintain tranquility.

In the face of this situation, the principal at Hutton, Hank Polsky, has viewed special education students as one way of stabilizing his population base.

Mr. Polsky also had other, more humanitarian instincts, of course. But the numbers game had to be played. As a result, approximately eighty of Hutton's eleven hundred students are now labeled as handicapped.

But there have been problems, too. As an administrator, Polsky is concerned that his school be seen as "one that works", one whose programs are successful. Yet, in his dealings with the central office special education staff, Polsky feels he has not been supported. He has taken on special classes only to have promised staff and services pulled out from under him. As a result, Polsky was reluctant when the proposal to move the autistic students was first made to him.

Mel's description of the events is, again, clearer than mine would be.

> Well, I was on the planning committee last year that worked on the move over here. And Polsky's first reaction was 'No way, I don't want those kids here.' I think in his heart he's really sensitive to special ed kids. But in the past he's been burned by the special ed department. He's taken programs that he thought they were going to back, and then they didn't. So I think he was taking a little bit different approach, like a bargaining position, just to make sure that they followed through on their commitments.

Danny was somewhat less charitable in his assessment of Polsky's initial opposition.

> We finally had to go to Freund (the superintendent) and he more or less ordered Polsky to take the class. Of course, now he seems to be one hundred percent behind us. He's really a success oriented guy and doesn't want problems in his school. The program hasn't caused him any problems so now he's a big supporter.

Even with the class set to go into Hutton in September, the concern and maneuvering did not stop. The styles and attitudes of Mel and Mr. Polsky became even more important. It was the coloring of the puzzle pieces now, not the shapes, that had to match. Again, I will let Mel tell the story.

> I knew that they were having trouble finding a teacher for this class. I knew two or three people had turned down the job, and I was really worried about it. The class was coming over here and everything was all set. There was just no teacher. I thought, if they put a new teacher in there, or transfer someone who doesn't want to come, the program is going to fall apart. You have to know Polsky. He's a real tough character. If things don't go right just blows his top. He's got the special ed administrators all really intimidated. They're all scared of him. You know, he just comes on real strong, no tact, just blows doors down. But he gets results.
>
> Anyway, the middle of the summer, the idea hits me - 'Why don't I go over there?' I knew Polsky and had worked for him before as a soccer coach. I thought I could get along with him. And I felt that the kids needed somebody who had some experience teaching them. So I decided to do it, but I had to set it up right.
>
> First, I checked out a friend of mine who taught at Open School to see if he would consider taking my integrated class at The John School. He said 'yeah', so then I mentioned to Tunney (the director of special education programming for the district) that I would be willing to go over to Hutton if he could find someone to fill the bill here at The John School. Well, he just kind of panicked and then after a few minutes, I said, 'Oh, maybe I know someone". Anyway, it all worked out and so by August I knew I was coming over here to Hutton. And I'm pleased with the move.

Making It Stick

To say the least, Hutton High didn't roll out the red carpet for Mel, John (he moved over from The John School, too), and the six autistic students. There was a history at Hutton which all of them had to contend with. There was their own history from which they could learn. For Mel, the move to Hutton was the fourth new program in six years, the third new building. He almost seemed like a pitcher who never got past the first inning, but never gave up any runs either.

When I began my observations of Matt's class, the second semester was about one month old. The time since September had seen some new problems arise and some old ones continue. It had also seen some progress. The faculty and staff, the regular students, and the class curriculum all presented different issues which needed to be addressed if the program were to have the success that Polsky demanded and Mel sought. Some of the more persistent problems of the past year need to be listed.

1) The faculty, for the most part knew nothing about autism. The questions would be put to Mel and Danny, "Are they dangerous?" "Can they talk?" "What's wrong with them in the first place?" "Why do they look at their fingers?" "What can we be expected to do with them?"

But at least when questions are asked, they can be answered. The other side of this problem for Mel was that teachers were not asking him enough questions. They were not reporting things that bothered them. One specific example of this involved Josh. Josh had never been in a setting where the men wore ties and coats. Josh quickly became fascinated and would stop male teachers in the hall to "check out their labels" as Mel referred to it. He would lift their ties and look under the coats, but, to Mel, the teachers seemed to take it in stride. It was only by accident, at a party, that Mel found out that the behavior was causing quite a lot of comment among the faculty.

> Jeez, I didn't realize everyone was that concerned about it. I got right on it, and we ended it right away, by having Josh keep his hands in his pockets. But it upset me. I want people to tell me right away about those things so I can nip them in the bud.

2) A more stubborn problem mentioned to me by several teachers was a more generalized resentment at having special ed students "dumped" into their classes. It was a problem from Hutton's history, not Mel's, but one that he now had to deal with. As the shop teacher explained it, "Some of the students have just shown up in class and it might be a week or a month - whenever I finally asked - before I would find out that the kid was EMH or something. The communication has often been totally at my initiative or just non-existent." The home economics teacher spoke of similar experiences in the past.

> The special ed students were just scheduled in, two or three together, and no one told us what their problems were. And then we would have all kinds of discipline problems and wouldn't understand why.

3) A third complaint voiced by some of the teachers mirrors the dilemma of Hutton as a whole. Those teachers in subjects most commonly chosen for mainstreaming feared that the "brighter" students were not taking the class as a result. Again the home economics teacher:

> I feel bad that more and more of the academically inclined kids are staying away from home economics. And sometimes I feel it's because they see the special ed kids in my classes. I think maybe they say 'Well I don't belong in that class, it has special ed kids in it.' It's frustrating.

4) The typical students have presented different problems. Two overlapping groups of students have surprised Mel by their negative reactions to his students: Blacks and below average students. Mel remembered the first few months at Hutton with bemusement and relief that the worst seemed over. "When we first got here, last Fall, and we would walk down the hall, it was funny. The crowd would just part in front of us. Everyone would just back up against the walls."

While I saw for myself that this extreme reaction had largely disappeared, other problems still troubled Mel.

> Here, it's been just the opposite from The John School. At The John School the students who were having some problems or were more disadvantaged really liked working with my kids. The sharper students couldn't have cared less. Here at Hutton it's the high achievers who are most interested, and the low achievers who don't want anything to do with us. Maybe it's some kind of adolescent peer pressure.
>
> And the reaction of the Black students has bothered me too. They react very differently from the white students. I don't know why - maybe they are just more open about it. But when one of my kids touches them or something, they might jump away. I even had a couple of them scream 'EEK, he touched me', and that kind of stuff. It has nothing to do with the color of the kid that's touching them. If Danielle or Lorna (the two Black students in Mel's class) walk up to a Black girl, she will probably still back away. It's better than it was. We try to deal with it on an individual basis. John (who is also Black) has gotten some track girls to come in the room at least, but they don't stay very long.

One student who would fall into the "high achiever" category and who had volunteered in Mel's class, verified that the general student reaction was less than perfect. However, she found it to be worse for the milder handicapped.

> They just ignore the autistic kids, or maybe back off and stare. It's the retarded kids who really get brutalized. There's one girl who is always running around crying because they tease her, and another guy whom the students lead on without him knowing they are making fun of him. It seems like the ones who are retarded get it the worst.

Progress and Tactics

Fortunately, the problems have lessened. The picture should not be given of an intolerant faculty and a mean spirited student body. I will discuss below some specific efforts made by Mel and John. But my observations and interviews revealed a school that seemed at least tolerant of the autistic students. The faculty I talked with who had Matt or Lorna in their classes, reported satisfaction with the way things had gone. If they weren't "experts" on autistic behavior yet, they at least trusted Mel's and John's judgements about who was appropriate for a particular class and who wasn't.

The students are not yet beating down Mel's door to volunteer. However, extreme reactions toward the students seem the exception rather than the rule, now. As one student put it in speaking of the disabled students in general: "I don't see any reason why they shouldn't be here. You might get your toes run over by someone in a wheelchair, but other than that there's no big problem".

Mel, too, has sensed the increased acceptance.

> At the beginning, no one knew me or knew the kids. But as time went by and they saw us in the halls and met me and John, they've come not to think much of us, and some of them have shown real interest. The acceptance - or at least the tolerance - has really come around, I think. We've still got a ways to go, but I think we've made real progress this year.

What integration and acceptance there is of the autistic students at Hutton today is not the result of any one person's efforts. No single person is to blame for the great deal that remains undone. What exists has evolved rather than erupted. And the process is continuing. Nonetheless, some specific examples of partial success need to be mentioned.

Mel's and John's Integration

1) Extracurricular involvement with regular students.

Both Mel and John helped coach this year. Mel was the soccer coach for the junior varsity team and John was an assistant track coach. These activities have had great advantages for a more rapid acceptance by both faculty and students. Both Mel and John know many more students than would have been possible, otherwise. They are known to the students in a wholly different context than as teachers of disabled kids. The administration appreciates the assistance with athletics, and a favorable relationship has been furthered in that area. The assistant principal gave me his assessment:

> Mel has really made himself a part of the faculty. Just another teacher. The soccer coaching helped that, I think.

The fact that Mel sees it as "a great diversion" is not insignificant either.

2) Providing information.

In addition to a forty-five minute in-service session for the teachers, Mel has gone out of his way to find opportunities to talk to classes of students about autism. Two student volunteers in Mel's class came out of an advanced psychology class to which Mel had spoken. On another occasion Mel talked about autism before several sections of a freshman English class, as part of a unit the students were doing on note taking.

Besides these are all of the informal occasions - in the teachers' lounge, after school, in the lunchroom - when a question can be asked and answered individually. The attitude of openness and eagerness to answer questions has been useful and appreciated by the other faculty.

3) Finding the path of least resistance.

Danny describes Mel's technique for infiltrating a new building as one of "working very hard, but quietly, to break down the doors without alienating people." An example of this is Mel's acceptance of a home economics class for Matt and Lorna which has all disabled kids in it. It is a new program at Hutton this year. The home ec teachers had been very distressed by what they saw as "dumping" disabled kids into their classes. This new class was the solution they wanted to try. Mel's comment to me was, "It's not really integrated but that's how the teacher wanted to do it. So I went along."

On another occasion Mel explained his basic approach to such situations:

> I look for soft spots. I tell myself, 'Just keep it real cool and low key. Just take one step at a time.' Because there is no way six kids could come in and upset a school with a thousand plus students. That's just not going to happen. If there's a choice that has to be made, then the six kids will be gone.

4) Use of generic services.

This might seem to be a fairly obvious action to take when integrating disabled students. Mel and John certainly look for ways to do this. An ironic discovery by Mel this year is that because many of the materials ordered for the class were not provided by the special education department, he has been forced to exploit the resources of the high school even more creatively than he might have otherwise. Mel is now skeptical about seeking much special help. Instead he would prefer consultants to come in and advise him on how to adapt the existing services at the school to his children's needs. Shop, home ec, the weight room, the swimming pool, vocational education, all are services which Mel hopes to use even more.

The Students Integration

It must be stated first that Matt and his classmates spend most of their time apart from typical students, in a self contained class. Only Matt and Lorna now go out for any other classes. And only Matt's shop class is a truly integrated setting. (An integrated gym class was being started for both Matt and Lorna at the end of my time at Hutton.)

Nonetheless, the degree of integration accomplished by Matt and the others is not negligible.

1) Individual mainstreaming.

Five mornings a week, Matt goes to a shop class with John. It is a regular class and it seems to be working well. The shop teacher is pleased. In fact, she reported to me that Matt presented fewer problems than did the more mildly handicapped students. The same is true for the home ec teacher. She has both Matt and Lorna in her class, assisted by Mel.

Two factors contribute to the success of what mainstreaming has occurred. First Mel and John accompany their students to the classes which they attend. The material presented is adapted by them to be appropriate for Matt or Lorna. Flashcards are used for home economics vocabulary. Demonstration is used in shop class. Above all Mel communicates with the prospective teacher before the student ever arrives and maintains the communication about how things are going.

Besides this support, a second factor which cannot be denied is that it is precisely because Lorna and Matt are more severely handicapped that their presence is less disruptive. Neither of them talks, or is actively disruptive. As long as the teacher can rely on Mel and John to communicate and supervise their students, they are in fact less burdened by the autistic students than other students who are talking out, requiring attention, and unassisted. This supports the premise that successful integration is in many ways more easily begun with the severely disabled despite the fact that the opposite direction is the one most often used.

2) Large group integration.

The settings in this category include the lunchroom, the weight room, and the hallways. All six of the students are in these settings, usually together, alongside typical students. The stress has been on reducing the bizarre behaviors of the students in these situations as well as encouraging as much independence as possible. The six have reached the point where they can navigate the corridors fairly independently, especially Matt, Lorna and Bob. At least the students do not march together. Mel has tried to further interaction by telling staff and students not to ignore his students if one of them is doing something inappropriate.

The cafeteria staff seem especially good at requiring Mel's students to indicate their desires, but at the same time not allowing them to delay significantly other students in line. Some students will now tell Bob or Fred to stop if they see them picking up garbage off the floor. Mel has found that if he asks a student to help out for a minute he is seldom refused.

There is still too much clustering. All of the students sit together at lunch, for example, even though someone surveying a crowded lunchroom would be hard pressed to pick out the table of autistic kids. All of the students, boys and girls, go to the weight room together, although such groups are usually separated by sex. But a start has been made. And Matt and his classmates seem thoroughly to enjoy the casual turmoil of the normal high school.

3) Peer Tutoring.

Mel's shower training routine for his students is an example of integration because he used student volunteers to assist him with Danielle. The two students would accompany Danielle to the locker room, help her out of her clothes and into a swim suit, help her get dressed again later, and follow her back to class. Not a lot. Just two typical students and Danielle, and for a relatively brief time. But the two students did learn that they could communicate with Danielle, that they could teach her to do things, that she had different moods just as they did.

Danny described what he hoped the two girls got out of the shower training volunteer work.

> They are at least more comfortable. And when they are some place else with some other kids, and someone's badmouthing our kids, I have a feeling that they would feel pretty bad at least, and might speak up and say something. The attitudes change slowly, even unconsciously at first. But at least the chances of them putting these kids down will be reduced. We need to have a lot more students go through that kind of experience.

The Future

The last section of the puzzle, a rather large section, has not been filled in yet. Indeed, the form and content of the final solution are far from clear. There are plenty of problems which have to be resolved.

One of the reasons for the success so far of the limited classroom integration of Matt and Lorna is the degree of support which Mel and John have provided to the regular teachers. One of them is with Matt and Lorna whenever a regular classroom is used. This has created an atmosphere of trust and interaction between Mel and the regular teachers. But Mel and John can only be in one place at a time. If the integration of the severely autistic students into the regular high school classes is to expand, one of two things will have to occur. Either the regular teachers will have to work with Mel's students without individual classroom support, or more people will be needed to provide that support.

To go very far in the first direction risks undermining the very basis of the successful experiences so far. The result of the lack of support historically at Hutton can be seen in the form of the new home economics class there. The absence of more systematic integration of disabled students who have been at Hutton longer and whose handicap is milder than Mel's students reminds one of Polsky's complaint of lack of support from the special education department. It also suggests a lack of creative solutions to that lack of personnel by the staff already in place at Hutton.

In the other direction lies the financial reality that more funded positions for classroom assistance are not likely to come flooding down from the central school district offices. One possible way around this is an increased use of peer tutors as support persons in integrated settings. One of the two student volunteers used by Mel this year suggested this as a solution.

> I'm on the Superintendent's council, and we had a session on the handicapped. I suggested that they use students who are interested in special ed as a way to get workers in the class, and they would get credit for it. With the cutbacks and having fewer aides, it might help that way too.

Questions of quality and continuity arise with the use of typical students in this manner of course, but it is an idea which Mel has thought of too. Indeed, such a use of students might be more productive than having them "tripping over each other", as Mel put it, if they were all in his classroom at once.

Perhaps another option in thinking about this support problem is that many of the older autistic students should be integrated more into the community than into classes within the school building. At this point in Matt's life is it more important that he get into an integrated art class or learn how to ride on an integrated city bus; buy food in an integrated grocery store; or wash dishes, clean test tubes, and assemble parts in an integrated job setting? Supervision would still be needed, but the pool of people available for such a function, and the possible arrangements for accomplishing it, would be enlarged.

At the same time as reducing the pressures for integration on the building itself, such a community curriculum would also address a main concern of Mel's about the quality of the pre-vocational and vocational curriculum he currently has. Mel envisions a "transitional class" of older autistic students such as Matt, Lorna and Bob, which would spend at least half of each day away from the school. Job skills, leisure skills, and daily living skills could all be worked on away from the high school setting. Such a curriculum is not unusual now for many unlabeled students at Hutton.

Vocational curriculum is currently perhaps the weakest part of Mel's program. It is a problem Mel worries about as much as increased integration. The two areas are not unrelated, of course. One of the big programming dilemmas of the future will be whether to train Matt and the others for the kinds of sheltered workshop jobs which do exist in the community (although only after a long waiting list), or to train them for more integrated jobs which do not exist but are more meaningful. Matt clearly has most of the skills needed for the kind of segregated, dead-end assembly jobs common to most workshops. The question is could

Matt not just as well be trained to work in a local hospital sterilizing instruments, a local restaurant busing tables, or a local grocery store stocking shelves? I think he could. But would there be a job for him when he left Mel's class? Is it part of Mel's job, or Polsky's, or whose, to create those employment opportunities? How this dilemma is solved in the next five years will go far in deciding what Matt's puzzle finally looks like.

A final area of concern to several people at Lancaster was summarized for me in a conversation with the vice principal.

> There is going to be a revolt of gifted and even just above average kids and their parents about the school focusing on the lower third of the student population in terms of services. It's already happening and it will get worse.

The description of the recent past at Lancaster told of a tension between how the school has to see itself, and how it would like to. The changing population has put the high school through a transition of character which is still not completed. Shall the school strive for academic excellence when most of its students just need a job? Shall it become a technical school whose students can fix a car but may have trouble reading a book? Or will it end up having neither academic quality nor vocational relevance by trying to have both?

The statement by the vice principal about the coming revolt was uttered as much in support as in warning of such a backlash. It illustrated for me the split personality I observed in the school's administration and staff. There seems an organizational ambivalence at Hutton toward its disabled students. The ambivalence is analogous to Matt's as he confronted the jigsaw puzzle. There is no forming vision at Hutton of how it wants to treat its handicapped students. There is serious doubt among some that services to the disabled students should be expanded at all. The danger exists that the puzzle will be left undone; judged not to be worth the effort. That judgement is not shared by Mel or Danny, certainly. Right now it is a judgement only vaguely formed and often unsaid. Nonetheless, it is there.

There are two ways to solve a jigsaw puzzle. In the first, one goes from piece to piece, noting the shapes, finding two that fit, then finding a third, and so on. Little reference is made to what the final result will look like. If you put enough pieces together, the final product will emerge. In a sense this is how the history and progress and tactics of Hutton High and Mel's class have proceeded. One step has led to the next. Events seemed to coincide nicely. People were not looking for a final picture to guide them. Or, if they looked, they seldom told each other what they saw.

The second way to solve a puzzle is by constantly keeping in mind the picture that is to be reproduced. Pieces are sought that match a particular detail of content and color in the desired image. The pieces gain their meaning only as part of the goal pursued, not as individual shapes. The future of Mel and his students at Hutton requires a shift to this latter approach. An agreement will have to be reached at some point soon on just what the final goal is.

Of course, little of this question of approach is of any moment for Matt. He just keeps working on the puzzle. When I left Mel's class for the last time, Matt was still working on it. He had a long way to go. But he is compulsive about these things. I hope, with some help along the way, that Matt finishes the puzzle. I hope everything will finally fit together for him.

CHAPTER 7

Integration In A Segregated School: A Study in Contradictions

by

Judy W. Kugelmass

Even before I set foot in the Evars School, I had had a sense of it. The name alone conjured up images of civil rights struggles and the dream of a better future for the children of Black America. Beyond this image was the impression of educational innovation and community involvement in both the planning and implementation of programming. I had arrived at this sense of the place from having heard its name used frequently around the University as the example of an active school during the sixties. A good friend had done his student teaching there and spoke nostalgically of the open-classroom and creative teaching that went on during that period and how "Evars" attracted large numbers of White middle-class and professional/academic families. Their children were drawn to this "magnet" program because of its focus on creative opportunities as well as attracting their parent's Liberal sensibilities. Somewhere during the past ten - fifteen years, all this has changed. As I was to discover, the "Evars School" is, according to the figures given to me by the principal, 88% Black. Without its Pre-K population, which makes up half the school, Evars is 94% Black. In addition, dramatic changes have come about in the structure and programming of the school. I was to discover, as I pursued my study, that my expectations were the results of slowly fading images of a liberal history that remained in tact only in the form of paradoxes.

I arrived at the school for the first time in order to meet with the principal and to begin to get a picture of the total setting as well as the special education program that had been nominated as an example of successful mainstreaming. Four classes of children labeled Severely Emotionally Disturbed (SED) were nominated as a unit. Although the criteria for selection in this first phase of the project was to be multiple-nominations, this program was selected with only one nomination because it was the only program recommended of elementary level SED kids. This coincides with my experiences in other settings in that"Severely Emotionally Disturbed" children are generally perceived as the least able to be integrated into regular programs because of their displays of disruptive behavior, which are in themselves taken as the symptom of the handicapping condition. The paradoxical nature of this study continued to become apparent early in my investigation as I tried to get a better understanding of the program and its place in the school.

The school building is located in a decaying neighborhood bordering the University and the downtown section of the city. Driving to the school, one passes two and three story wood framed houses, some abandoned, with broken windows and half hanging on porches, others, occupied and in various stages of disrepair. Here and there a home well kept stands out. Immediately bordering the school building is a large housing project. Constructed of red brick this two and three story apartment complex stretches over a city block. Only Black people are visible on the streets. Continuing to drive, with the school building at your left, you face a major four lane divided highway built on an over-pass through the city. If one was to pass under the highway and wind a few short blocks away, you would be on "the other side of the tracks," at the University and the major city hospitals and Medical Center. Looming above the overpass, facing this neighborhood is the multi-million dollar domed sports stadium now under construction. I couldn't help but wonder, if this neighborhood would eventually become its parking lot, and was struck once again by the financial priorities of our society.

From the parking lot at the right side of the school one gets a historical perspective as to the development of this building. The rear of the building is fifty or sixty years ago what was the entire school. This three story brick structure is hidden from view when you enter from the main front entrance. The city blocks behind it reveal more abandoned and decaying houses and a large factory. It is in this section of the building that the four SED classes are located, along with a Head Start program which is housed on the second floor. The middle section of the school seems to connect the old building with the modern facade. This section was built in the mid 1950's and a plaque on the first floor shows that it use to be called the Shoton School. The school gymnasium/cafeteria is located on the first floor of this section. As you walk around to the front of the building, the contrast with the view from the parking lot is striking. The new wing of the school, built in the early 60's, is a very modern looking two story grey-brick and concrete form structure. The words "Medgar Evars School" are blazened on the side of the building in foot high, steel letters. Over each of the windows are huge, awning-like concrete forms. The windows are not made of transparent glass but rather are constructed of a translucent plastic, covered by a heavy criss cross wire mesh. The front path leading to the large glass main doors has a modern architectural rendition of an old stone wall running along its side. Several people have commented that the school appears to have the feeling of a fortress. I am struck primarily by the contrast between what one sees from the front of the building and the deteriorating older structure at the back, where the special education program is kept, hidden and separate from the rest.

As you walk into the main lobby of the building, there is a large mural of the Civil rights leader for whom the school was named. To its right is a bulletin board which contains the art work and projects done by pre-school children. This display changed frequently during my visits here. To the left side of the hall, after passing the first corridor which leads to the nurses office, Instructional Specialists' office, teacher's room, and several Pre-K and kindergarten classes, is a large bulletin board, changing monthly with commercially manufactured displays representing each month. Along side of this display, a smaller bulletin board tells of community news as well as services which may be of interest to many of the adults whom I see coming in and out of the building. The mothers and fathers of pre-school children often accompany the youngsters to and from the building. There have been several bake sales in the main lobby as well as announcements made in the mornings of other community events. On the whole, I sense a genuine attempt to bring the community closer to the school.

The perceptions of many of the personnel here is, however, that the families of most of the children are alienated from school and are therefore very difficult to reach. Dave, a graduate student intern, put it this way, "You have to look at the schools too. It is very threatening. A lot of parents not having the skills to deal with the people at this school, with the verbiage. So how much input can they have when they don't know the system or what their kids should have."

Past the bulletin board, on the left, is the main office. Immediately inside the glass door and to its right, is a bench where one sits to wait for an appointment with the principal. Most often, it is occupied by a child or two who have been sent there for some sort of disciplinary action. On several occasions I have seen children, sitting on the bench, completing their 98th rendition of, "I must not..." The wall behind the bench is glass so all who pass know who has been sent there. Sometimes this serves as an amusing diversion for both the child being punished and those passing by. For the most part, children pass through the halls in orderly fashion, usually in two lines. Depending upon the teacher they are with, they talk quietly to each other or march silently along, the teacher calling out the names of the offending child and his or her impending punishment. Except in a few cases, I do not get the overall impression of the military like order, but rather a strong focus on discipline.

Facing the bench is an adult height counter which separates the secretaries' space from the rest of the office. There are two secretary/receptionists here, a grey-haired, Caucasian woman in her fifties and a younger, heavy set Black woman in her thirties, a CETA aide. The older woman is in charge and tells me to wait as the principal, Carlita Sharp, is still in another meeting. It has been difficult for me to begin my study as she has never been available when I have called, always being in a "meeting." In addition, she was reluctant to give any approval to my coming here until she got the O.K. from "downtown." I later learn that the "Evars" school is reluctant to allow any research efforts to go on here and that people have either been refused entry or conduct their research without "official approval." The positive focus of this project has, however, broken through this barrier and I have been allowed full access to the school and its staff. After waiting several minutes, Mrs. Sharp emerges from the door to the left of the secretary's station. A child's crayon drawing of her portrait plus several other children's drawings hang on the door, beneath the sign, "Principal." Carlita is a fair-skinned, Black woman in her early thirties. She is about 5'7" with an average build, wearing glasses, which often hang around her neck on a silver chain. Her hair is well-groomed and carefully styled in a fashion that can best be described in the same way as her clothing, i.e., "conservative." Mrs. Sharp has been principal for one year, replacing her former boss when that woman went on to become a "Deputy Superintendent" for the city. Carlita has been at Evars since 1972. She had worked in the capacity of a "Helping Teacher," a person who trains teachers. "...I worked with probationary teachers. I had been a 'Helping Teacher' for about three years and before that I had been an "Instructional Specialist." So I knew the teachers, the kids, I knew the building and I knew the parents."

The position of "Instructional Specialist" is one that is quite vague and often defined by the school in which one works. Although it seems to carry administrative and supervisory responsibilities, the position is officially a teacher line and therefore carries no real authority. Jean, the "Instructional Specialist" at Evars for the past five years, is a Caucasian woman in her early thirties, with neatly done, shortly curled light brown hair and gives one the impression of being an athletic person, both by the firmness of her medium build and the way she sort of swaggers as she walks. She is generally dressed casually in slacks, a print blouse and low heeled shoes. Both she and Carlita define her position as one of coordinator of resources and programs as well as being responsible for monitoring the academic progress of the regular students in the school. The job description, written in the school "Handbook" lists seventeen separate responsibilities of this position in this setting and includes the coordination of the mainstreaming of students. The 17th role is listed as "etc." and is an expression of the fact that she may be called upon to take on any responsibility that she and the principal see fit. It is not surprising to me that both of these women's perceptions of the mainstreaming process as well as their perspectives on many other issues are often similar. It is also interesting that, for the most part, these perspectives contradict what I later observe as well as the points of view expressed by many of the staff, "in the trenches." It is also not surprising that when Carlita resigns as principal at the end of May, Jean is called upon to become "Acting Principal." Carlita leaves to take a position in "the private sector." The administrative turnover in this school is high, as it is in the other elementary schools in the city.

The principal's inner office is a large room with her desk off to the right and a large round table more to the center of the room than to the left. It is surrounded by eight or more chairs. It is at this table that we talk and it is here where she conducts all of her "meetings," including Pupil Service, Team Committee on the Handicapped meetings and meetings with each of the teachers on the "regular" staff once a month. At these "staff" meetings conducted in conjunction with the "Instructional Specialist," each child's progress in the regular education program is discussed and charted. The charts for each class hang on the bulletin board across from the round table and present a visible representation of each classes "Levels" in reading, math, and spelling. The Special Ed classes are, however, not represented. These "Levels" are determined by the child's standing on the "Levels Tests" developed by the city. If any child is displaying difficulty in any of the academic areas, then different curriculum approaches are recommended. If problems persist, the child may be referred to the Pupil Service Team for possible referral for Resource Room assistance, "Title I," Reading, Speech Therapy, Social Work intervention, or psychological assessment with the possibility of "labeling," for Special Ed. "Labeling" is seen as the method of last resort and because of this attitude, children are seen in the Resource Room both if they are labeled as mildly handicapped or if they are considered borderline. The Resource Teacher does not work with children in the SED program.

An "Alternative Program" has been developed as a step before labeling kids SED. This program is a self-contained classroom of seven boys, ages 9 and 10, most of whom have behavior problems. They are seen as needing a structured environment and limited movement during the day. They all go out for "Specials," i.e., music, gym, and art, and receive Resource Room assistance. One of these students is now "mainstreamed" on a full-time basis but still getting Resource Room help. It is not apparent to me at first, how these boys and their program differ from that of the four SED classes that I have come to study. Carlita's explanation is that they are being given "A last chance." This seems to indicate that there is a definite stigma attached to being labeled and placed into one of the SED rooms. As I spend more time in this setting and learn more about the nature of the SED program, it becomes apparent that neither the principal nor most of the other "regular" staff, perceive of the SED program as being an integral part of their school. It is its own mini-school, attached but separate from the rest, in more than just physical location. This program has its own name, the "Learning Center." As Carlita sees it:

> "That whole Learning Center was new last year, the teachers and the teacher's aides. So they went through a lot together, a lot of growing pains and everything but they came out of it as a very close knit, well organized team. They had the discipline set up, they had their rules and regulations, they had their methods of teaching, they share, they do a lot of teaming. And all I do is just reinforce what they do. They handle just about all their own problems down there and it's a team that I'm very, very pleased with. And the teachers in the building are quite pleased with them."

The Instructional Specialist believes that what goes on in the Learning Center is quite different from what occurs in the rest of the school:

> "...I think a lot of people forget that in the Learning Center classes there are only ten kids and two adults and it's a very structured behavior modification type program and point system. And the kids leave at two o'clock. So that the amount of aggression and abuse they may show, may be the same as we have in a regular class. But if you were to take the very same kid and put him in a class of twenty five kids, with only one teacher, no point system, and go all day, you're going to see a lot more violent and aggressive behavior. Sometimes the Special Ed. teachers seem to forget that. They say, 'Look at this kid, he's doing so well, there's nothing wrong with him.' I know this because the first five years that I was here, I referred kids there and I know what those kids were like before they were referred. So that's the problem, the kids may look the same when they're in the Learning Center but it's the amount of people there and the program that they're in."

The Learning Center is contunually referred to as an addendum when I ask for information about the school as a whole from either of these two women. The number of children in the school is reported as, "460 kids, 230 of them being 3, 4 and 5 year olds, 190 regular school-age and 40 Learning Center." Numbers of "teacher lines" are alloted to the school, "aside from Special Ed." Throughout the school, from both the L.C. and regular teachers, there is "them" and "us"; "up there" and "down here."

In the past, the Learning Center ordered its own materials and books, this year, however, in an attempt to facilitate "mainstreaming" by assuring that all the children in the building were following the same curriculum, Jean ordered the reading programs and texts for the entire school; making the school wide approach to reading, math, spelling and language become "Distar." One must have a complete understanding of "Distar" in order to get a thorough picture of this school and its approach toward mainstreaming. The "Distar" program approaches the teaching of basic academic skills through a systematic and highly structured series of lessons, each built upon what has been learned the previous day. Students and teachers are instructed as to the precise language they are to use in each lesson. The method has always reminded me of the "catechism approach" to teaching and learning. Like its religious counterpart, "Distar" has its believers and proseletizers as well as the heretics, like myself, who tend to see this approach as mechanized and lacking in the opportunity for either student or teacher to develop their creativity and basically as boring. The strongest argument for the use of "Distar," particularly for populations of "deprived" children is that, "it works." There are no aspects of the sequence of decoding skills needed for learning to read or for the development of proper language skills that are left to chance. Each bit of minutia is covered on a day to day, step by step sequential manner, with a large degree of reinforcement provided by workbooks, dittoes, and homework. Instruction is conducted in a small group, seated in a semi-circle facing the teacher. This is done preferably in the same location in the classroom each day. The children's success in one lesson becomes the motivation for the next. By having a "Total Distar School," children can ideally move from one room to the other and be assured a consistency in approach as well as knowing that a child on "Lesson 53, Distar I Reading," has the same skills as any other child on this step. The children learn to respond in unison and one can hear their voices fill the halls as they respond in the loud, word by word fashion that I have come to identify as "Distareese."

A typical Distar Language Lesson begins with the teacher saying, "Get Ready," she may hold up the "Distar Teacher's Book," point to the picture and say, "The boy is on the horse. Where is the boy?" Snap her fingers, point to the children and they will respond in unison, "The boy is on the horse."

Although the "Instructional Specialist" and the Principal are its primary proponents, most of the teachers at this school seem to feel positively about the use of "Distar." Betty Olds, a Special Education teacher in the Learning Center described her experience with Distar in the following way:

> "Well, I took my highest group from Day One at the beginning of last year and they are now in the beginning of Distar II. And they're reading. It's just tremendous. The "word attack skills" that they've learned. I might have lucked into getting it across to them but Distar's given me a method. And I know that its been researched enough that, hopefully, they are not skipping things. So I like it. I like it a lot because I see that they like it. They know exactly what to do. It's predictible and successful and I like it."

And yet, with all this predictability and sequential learning, I observed some glaring contradictions as to the actual use of Distar as a method of facilitating "mainstreaming," and its professed use as a method of fitting kids right into the learning sequence they had been experiencing in their Spec. Ed. setting. I had chosen two students from the Learning Center to focus on for this study. Both were often cited as examples of kids who were being "successfully mainstreamed".

However, neither child was able to fit into the sequence that was occurring in the regular class into which he was to be placed. Betty reported that Carl, although the highest student in her Distar reading groups was far below the lowest group in the second grade class he was to go into and so she, "...had to accelerate Carl about double lessons for about two or three weeks, to get him up to M's lowest group." Similarly, Steve's teacher reported that he had to "...move up thirty lessons and hasn't had any problems," since he's been mainstreamed. In this case, it seems as though Steve was being held back academically by the pace at which the Distar lessons were proceeding in his class. My observations in two regular classrooms indicated that the Distar lessons here are geared toward the rate of learning of the "average" child within each group. In this setting the "average" child is below grade level expected for a child of his or her age. Children are referred to as "bright" if they are at "level." It became apparent to me that Distar benefits the normative population of this school, i.e., the inner-city Black child who is relatively economically deprived, and with limited experiences of the kind that are necessary for academic success. The brighter child, who would more than likely be considered "average" in another school, has the advantage of being at the "head-of-the-class," which may enhance his self image temporarily but ill prepares him for the middle school he has to enter. Although "Distar" has developed new programs to foster "thinking skills," it generally does not prepare the children for the creative problem solving they will need later on. Additionally, being in an essentially all Black school does not prepare the children to interact as well as compete with better prepared White peers. As stated by Sue Brown, the fourth grade teacher I observed, the children are not prepared for the racism they will face when they leave "Evars."

> "The problem I think, outside of here, is, well, I think that the other schools are sort of prejudiced. I look in the newspaper when they name the kids that graduate from high school each year and my husband and I wonder what happened to all the Black kids that we knew. Sure there are lots of 'em that are evil, like I said before, but most of these kids are O.K.. Look at their levels here."

An even more glaring contradiction began to take shape regarding the academic needs of the students in the Learning Center, as perceived by Jean and that which I was able to observe in the Special Ed. classes themselves, as well as what both the students and staff had to say about the academic programs in both settings, and its relationship to "mainstreaming." Jean repeatedly emphasized that the primary disability of the children in the SED classes is emotional in nature and that therefore it is their behavior that determines whether or not a child is "ready" to be mainstreamed. Her response to my question regarding the preparation given to the regular classroom teacher for the mainstreamed child's academic needs was:

> "Instruction-wise, not too much is done because of the fact that the students are emotionally disturbed rather than academically handicapped. Usually we try to place the students in an instructional group that they can function in. And we ask the teacher to expect the student to be able to function academically as the rest of the class does. Now, there's one student who's a fourth grader who's doing fourth grade math but he's very slow. In that case we tell the teacher that he's not dilly-dallying around when he's doing his independent work, he's just slow and don't force him to get all the board work done like you do the rest of the class. He'll get the stuff right that he does if you push him, he won't be able to take it. ...that's not a severe emotional disturbance, just a slow pace.
>
> Spec. Ed. can get whatever textbooks they want with their textbook money but we agree that it would be easier (for every one to use Distar), because the kids are emotionally disturbed and not retarded, whereas, in that case, the kids might need to have special books. We have them in the same books as the regular class."

These statements were contradicted at the COH meeting I attended, where it became obvious that many of the kids whose behavior is now appropriate do, in fact, have severe learning deficits and therefore could not be mainstreamed because their academic level was far below their chronological age. One of the solutions to this problem here, as in other settings is to relable the kids, if possible. One child discussed was of fifth grade age but had "levels" below fourth grade and although, "his behavior is good," could not be mainstreamed. The school district head of the COH recommended that he be kept in the SED program until his academic skills can be improved and then return him to a regular program. The psychologist asked, "If he qualifies for EMH, does that open any options for you? Could we label him L.D. if he doesn't fall low enough?" And in another case, the Special Ed. teacher discusses another SED student, "He needs an L.D. program. His behavior is O.K.. We cured him. He is calm now and not aggressive." The Resource Teacher responds, "The deal was, when we took him, was to get rid of the behavior. His primary disability has been identified as Neurologically Impaired. Its been proven many times. That is now his primary disability and that's the kind of program he needs."

In other cases, the Distar approach may not in fact be the appropriate program for a child in either the Learning Center or in a regular class. Betty was not aware that Carl's I.Q. fell within the EMR range and had never thought that his difficulty in school might, in part, be due to academic frustration. In addition, his Bender-Gestalt performance showed a number of indices of perceptual disfunction. In spite of this and the recommendation from his former school that he not be placed in a Distar program, as he had failed at it there, he repeated Distar in this school. He is still behind the other students in the regular classroom in which he is mainstreamed, although he is chronologically a year older and had been through this program once before. With all of these deficits, Carl is the highest functioning student in his Learning Center class where, according to Jean, "the students are emotionally disturbed rather than academically handicapped." My observations in this class revealed a group of boys whose background was extremely limited. Only one of the seven students had ever heard of a volcano, never the less have the slightest awareness of the eruption of Mt. St. Helens, which filled the media and excited every other child I knew at the time. The intertwining of their experiential and academic deficits with their poor self image was evidenced repeatedly in this class. It became particularly apparent in one child when he expressed his reluctance to go to music class and began to act out once he arrived in that room. He was unable to read the words to the song they were to learn that day. The music teacher expressed her understanding of the problem, "You know, they just get something in their head about not being able to read. They are real smart and could do it. I don't know what approach they use up there but they should try something else, rhythm or something."

Because the focus of the Learning Center is on the children's behavioral problems, those students who do not have glaring academic deficits may fall behind their peers in the regular program. As I observed these students, I could see the difficulty the teachers would have in getting them to attend to academic tasks so that they could get to the point of being "ready" to be mainstreamed and thereby have some appropriate peer models. Although appropriate behavior is seen as the key factor in getting the child out of the Learning Center, fitting in academically is of equal significance. As Jean, the Instructional Specialist put it, "We cannot expect a teacher to set up a separate academic program for one kid. That's not mainstreaming." Betty Olds, Carl's Learning Center teacher, feels that there are some major difficulties with this approach:

> "...There is a big element of "Catch 22" with that. They are sent to us for behavioral clean-up and if we do our jobs right and we clean up their behavior, and they have lost a year in the process. Or if they came to us a year behind, we keep them a year behind and there are big problems with that. We do get into a good deal of academics but, you can't do everything in a vacuum. It is changed through the academics but there never has been a week where I haven't lost at least one group because of a behavior problem. So there is no way I could run my groups as thoroughly as M. does."

The students in the Learning Center recognize that the academic demands placed on them in this setting are not as stringent as those in the regular class. As two boys who were playing pool in the "Game Room" of the Learning Center explained, in regular school you never got to earn points so that you could play, "...but just work all the time." Steve, a mainstreamed student, feels that the regular students are very aware of this:

> S: "They think that when you go to the Learning Center that it will be easy and you won't have to do so much work."
>
> Me: "It's not true?"
>
> S: "It's true. Ms. D's class does a bunch of work."
>
> Me: "So they're right? It is easier down here."
>
> S: "It's hard up there."
>
> Me: "Is that one reason that you didn't want to go?"
>
> S: "I didn't want to go up there and I still don't want to go up there but I have to."

It is apparent that "mainstreaming" is defined in this setting as the process by which a child who no longer exhibits "behavioral difficulties" is returned to a regular program. He is considered as "ready" for this process only if his academic performance, as well as his behavior, can match up to that which exists in a regular class, with children who are at least one year within his chronological age. Although this is somewhat easier to achieve at "Evars" where the "average" student is functioning slightly below "level," it has been made difficult by the fact that there are only two regular classes at each grade, i.e., 190 kids in the regular program and 34 Learning Center students. In the third grade, the problem became particularly difficult as there are 50 third graders and 15 kids in the Learning Center who are the same age. The regular class teachers became alarmed at the possibility of their classes becoming filled with the SED students and so a program was worked out whereby "mainstreaming" was defined in more stringent terms and the process tightened, so as to allot only two "slots" for mainstreaming in each regular class. The process became additionally complicated when the two oldest classes in the Learning Center were not removed from this building in September as planned. They contain fifth and sixth grade age students and "Evars" regular program only goes up to the fourth grade and so there are 15 fourth and fifth graders to be mainstreamed into the regular fourth grade. Although these two classes shall be removed from this building next September, Jean found herself in a position this year of having to define mainstreaming in a way that was feasible, given the limited "slots" for each kid. She recognizes that "mainstreaming" can mean giving a troubled youngster the opportunity to "feel good" about himself because he is being given the opportunity to interact with kids in a regular class. As she put it, "...an ego building thing." Or it could mean what Dan, Steve's Learning Center teacher, would like it to mean, an opportunity for the kids in his class to have positive role models. He would like to see each of his kids in a regular class for at least an hour a day so that they have a concrete idea of what is expected of them. He has come to accept the fact that mainstreaming is not defined in that way, in this school.

Jean explained the process that she and the Resource Teacher went through in defining "mainstreaming" this fall:

> "Well, once we looked at these numbers it became clear that we had to define what we meant by 'mainstreaming.' K. and I met with the special ed. teachers to define what we meant and we came up with the compromise of "the nine week mainstreaming," where the kid is already to go, and the "full-year mainstreaming," where the kid has some things and he is going to be gradually phased in. And then we said, 'O.K. how many kids do you have, looking at your class now, that are ready for this and how many ready for that.' It turned out that there were about eight kids, eight to ten kids in third, fourth and fifth grades. Six kids in fourth and fifth grade, and about four or more in third grade and three second graders. Two were ready to start right away, of the second graders, for the 'nine weeks,' Carl and James. And then they'd be gone and then we'd be able to slot them in, two at a time.
>
> ...we had a meeting with the Special Ed. Department and the teachers and the regular ed. teachers and we discussed it. We decided that a fair compromise would be no more than two kids being mainstreamed in a room at one time. So the teachers do expect to have possibly two kids being mainstreamed in their room. That way we were able to deal with the Special Ed. teachers saying, 'Hey, you're forcing this kid to be stuck in Special Ed. another year. He needs to be mainstreamed.' And the Regular Ed. teachers saying, 'Hey, it's not that easy.' So we agreed on a compromise and they are expecting to have kids."

Every staff member in this school with whom I spoke felt very positively about the communication that went on in September at this meeting. They felt that this meeting plus the In-Service on mainstreaming that went on during that summer, helped them to understand the needs of the other staff members and of the children and therefore helped to make the mainstreaming program, as defined here, a success. "Communication," was cited as the most positive aspect of these meetings. The Principal and the Instructional Specialist felt that this communication went both ways. Carlita described what went on at the summer meeting this way:

> "Well, they first of all explain what the district means by 'mainstreaming.' ...starting out at the 'most restrictive' and moving gradually to the 'least restrictive' whereby taking students out on a half hour basis into a regular class where they would go maybe for reading and then come back. If they

> could handle that, after a certain amount of time, then expanding maybe to a math session. If they could handle that, then expanding and expanding. But, prior to all of that, sitting down with the regular classroom teacher and talking to them about what the child has been doing in the classroom. What type of class the special ed. class has been? What types of reward systems have been used? What types of discipline has been used? What type of discipline is in the class? What type of rules do you have? How can we coordinate this so that when the child comes to the classroom he will be able to function? And then, after sitting down with the teacher and going over this, then talking about the time period for mainstreaming."

Although this description coincided with the process described by members of staff in both regular and special ed. programs, it was generally agreed, by the Learning Center staff, that the burden of accommodation fell on them and their students. Betty Olds expressed her perceptions in this way:

> "I feel like it was one way. I never had any feeling of resenting it or any negative thing. That's just the way it is. But that is the way it was (at the in-service). The onus is on us to modify the kids to fit into that mold. I think that we had the square pegs and we're the ones that had to round it out."

Dave, a graduate student intern attended the fall meeting. His impressions were:

> "I feel that there was good communication and everybody was open to mainstreaming, more than in other schools, because of the administration and the people involved in setting up this model. Maybe not what I thought it would be, was that the regular teachers were saying, 'Here is our format. Now the SED kids must fit, in some way.' I felt that the SED teachers and kids had to make all the accommodations. These are the expectations that the kids are going to have to deal with in this particular situation...right now the kids have to do all the changing."

Dan, Steve's Learning Center teacher, feels that more needs to be done with regular teachers to help them get a better understanding of the Learning Center and its students.

> "I know because I've talked to a lot of classroom teachers who are good friends of mine, that it's hard for them to deal with the situation that you've got nine kids in your classroom, they've got thirty kids in their classroom. You're sending a kid to them. It's a very hard concept to deal with and I think it is forever going to be one. Because they are afraid they haven't had the training in dealing with special kids. I think that's one.

> Maybe an in-service on that type of thing would be good in-service because I think it would make them feel more secure. ...they have all these misconceptions about this kid who's coming in. He's going to be a wild man.

My visits to the Learning Center and the special education classes of two "successfully mainstreamed" students clarified many of the concerns expressed by the Special Ed. staff. Observations of the behavior of students in these classes, as well as the structure of their program were contrasted to that which I was able to observe in Carl and Steve's regular class placements. This enabled me to get a better understanding of the process in which they were involved, the problems encountered and some of the approaches used in dealing with these issues.

The most glaring contradiction in studying the Learning Center as an example of "successful mainstreaming," at first seems to be its physical location. How can a program that is set apart from the rest of the school building, at the furthest end of a long narrow corridor, down a flight of stairs, and hidden behind double doors that are reminiscent of a hospital ward, be considered to be integrating students into a "least restrictive" environment? The relativity of the concept becomes clear when you realize that up until 1977, the Learning Center was a program operated by a local "Community Action" organization. The program was not a public school program and was located downtown in the office building operated by this agency. Then, as now, the students in the program were essentially all Black, acting out, aggressive boys. The L.C. is composed of 34 boys, 28 of whom are Black, ages 7-12. In 1977, the school district, prompted by P.L. 94-142, took over the program and put it under the auspices of Special Education. I am not able to say with certainty why the program was housed at "Evars," but there is a good deal of evidence to support the conjecture that it was the most efficient way for the city to deal with this very difficult population. Voluntary busing, declining enrollment and the end of the "Magnet" programs at "Evars," left this new building with a good deal of classroom space. However, I think it would be somewhat naive to believe that space was the only consideration in placing the Learning Center here. It seems to me that it would have made more sense, programmatically, to spread these children throughout the city and therefore avoid the contaminating effect that these boys have on one anothers behavior. Every teacher commented how each kid tends to, "...set the other off." I was able to observe this continually in the classroom and hallways. Laurie, the Social Work Aide, could feel this happen on a program wide basis, since she interacted with all the students, each day. "It's been one of those days today. You know there are times when you just can feel that it is going to be an impossible day. It's contagious. All the kids seem to get super high at the same time. At other times everyone is real calm and we all wonder. It's real strange." Carl expressed his awareness of this, "There's too much trouble there. Lots of fights and kids get you in trouble. They're always starting stuff." Even on a day that I visited that was agreed by all to be a "good day," the level of non-verbal tension and activity left me exhausted and wondering how I ever managed to work with a classroom of "emotionally disturbed" children.

A little detective work revealed a possible reason for placing the Learning Center in this building. A brochure sent to all parents of elementary age children in this city, to inform them of the voluntary busing program, lists those schools which can be transferred into or out of. Examination of this pamphlet revealed that "Evars" is the only school in this city into which Black students cannot transfer and out of which White students cannot transfer. I asked the Social Work Aide, Laurie, to find out where the students in the Learning Center had gone to school before their referral to Special Ed.. Of The thirty four that were enrolled at that time, only three were referred from "Evars." Two of those three are children she referred to as, "real problems, very disturbed." The third had been sent directly after having spent some time at a residential treatment center. She went on to explain that just about all the other Black, Learning Center kids are from this neighborhood and would have gone to this school if it wasn't for voluntary busing. They were too acting-out and/or aggressive for the predominantly White schools to which they were bused and so were labeled SED and returned to "Evars," via the Learning Center. All the teachers I spoke with felt essentially the same way, i.e., that most of the Learning Center kids would never have been labeled as SED if they were students at Evars but rather see them as victims of White Middle Class expectations. Mary F., Carl's regular second grade teacher, feels that he is an example of a kid who got caught in this type of situation. Speaking of her regular second graders:

> "I've got a lot of kids that I think, if were in another school, would be in a Learning Center situation. He's all right in this room. I think if you took Carl and put him in S.H., he'd be right out. ...a very middle class school where he'd freak them right out. I'm just a lot more use to that. ...in this class I've got 22 kids and there are probably 6 or 7 that I am constantly aware of what they're thinking and what they're doing and he would be one of those, but no more so than the other 6 or 7. ...I don't know that if Carl was at Evars, he would have ended up in the Learning Center. He was at another school."

It became obvious to me that the mainstreaming of certain Learning Center children was successful because their behavior was essentially the same as many of the "normal" children in this setting. Sally D., the fourth grade teacher in whose class Steve is mainstreamed, sees his problems as minimal.

> S: "Like I said, I didn't see that he has too many. Some of the other kids in here have more problems than him. Some of them just don't have no control. They are evil."
>
> Me: "What do you mean?"
>
> S: "Well, they are just plain mean all the time. They don't got no control over themselves. It's like something inside of them is missing. They don't got no discipline."

The concept of "emotional disturbance" is one that is very relative to the normative population with which the "deviant" individual is being compared. What my observations of this setting seem to indicate is that students are "successfully mainstreamed" only when they are no longer considered deviant.

Since many of the Learning Center students are essentially the same as a good many of the other "normal" problem kids in regular classes, only those students who are the best, both academically and socially, get to fit into one of the few "slots" available in the regular program. Laurie, the Social Work Aide in the Learning Center, feels that they have to be harder on their kids because when it comes time for them to be mainstreamed, these students have to be better than the other kids. This feeling was reflected by other Learning Center staff. She explained her perception of this situation in the following way:

> L: "Because their expectations are that the kids are going to act bizarre. So much, that they actually look for it."
>
> Me: "The expectations of the other teachers?"
>
> L: "We've had a lot of problems in terms of that and mainstreaming our kids. The particular issues are either that they are stunned that the kids can behave or, 'When is he going to do it?' And I don't even know what 'It' is or that a kid is not ready to go back to a regular room because he doesn't know how to behave when they already have another kid in the room who may also be just as unappropriate."

The physical education teacher and lunch room supervisor feel that the Learning Center children are often better behaved than many of the classes of regular students with whom he interacts:

> "Learning Center kids will do more than the other kids. They have learned that they have problems with their temper and to tell the teacher to prevent blow-ups. As a matter of fact, in gym-class especially, the Learning Center kids are better than the regular kids.... I have had only one fight with Learning Center kids and about ten with other kids. Here, at lunch, there is rarely a problem."

The proof of this situation can be best illustrated by the case of "James Jones." Every staff person with whom I spoke, cited this boy as the primary example of "successful mainstreaming." In fact, he is the only student who has ever completed the "nine-week" sequence whereby a student is gradually phased into a regular program over a nine-week period until he is able to be in the regular program "full-time." At the end of successful completion of this time period, he is returned to his home school and a regular program.

Each person was quick to add that they never had any idea why he was sent here in the first place. He never acted out or presented any sumptoms of bizarre behavior and he was able to perform on "Level." In spite of the fact that each staff person felt that he was not "emotionally disturbed," each one recommended that I use him as an example of "successful mainstreaming."

A paradox exists in the general belief that the "Learning Center" is harder on its kids than is the regular program. The assumption is generally made that the special education program offers a greater degree of structure and predictability than that which exists "upstairs." My observations of two classes in each setting revealed the opposite to be the case, in most instances. Both the second grade and fourth grade teachers that I observed and interviewed see themselves as highly structured teachers whose focus is on discipline. Mary, the second grade teacher, is a Caucasian woman in her early thirties, small and thin, and casually dressed. She has been teaching for eight years, here at "Evars," and has taught several different grade levels.

> "I've always been very, very, structured, even back when I first started. Well, when I first came I was a new teacher too, so it's (Evars) changed or I've developed a lot. But I've never been too big on 'open classrooms,' in this situation. But not to say it wouldn't work in some other situation."

"This situation," refers to a setting in which the majority of the children come from "deprived" backgrounds and are lacking many of the basic academic and social skills necessary for success in our public school system. Sally D., the fourth grade teacher I observed echoed Mary's sentiments. She is a Black woman of the same age, of medium build, and in her last months of pregnancy.

> "Kids have got to learn discipline. It's like I tell them, when they leave here and go out into those other schools, those teachers are not going to put up with any nonsense. So I want these kids to learn that now. ...I have five girls and nineteen boys in my class. I guess it's because I'm stricter than the other fourth grade teacher and so they give me the hardest kids to handle. I don't believe that kids should be up and out of their seats and wandering around the room. They have to have discipline, be in their seats and concentrating in order to learn anything.

> I want them to grow up to be men who can take care of themselves and their families. I met a kid the other day. He was a kid I use to know over here. He's about sixteen years old and he's on the street already, with nothing to do. I don't want these kids to end up that way. Other schools will just throw them out, so I give them the discipline here so that they can make it. I'm hard on them I know but I never say anything to them that I don't mean and they know ahead of time just what I'll do if they get out of line."

Observation in both these classrooms proved that these women act on their words. Their styles are very different, however, Mary being softer in her approach and using a good deal of positive verbal reinforcement. Her classroom is full of interesting materials and art work, as well as displays of the children's work. Her seating arrangement for the children is in three clusters, reflecting their "Distar" groups. The seating arrangement encourages the children to interact with one another. However, during "work time" the children must work silently at their seats. The mornings work is spelled out carefully to the children each day and so it is highly predictable. The children can earn "points" and win a prize after the accumulation of a given number of points. My overall impression of this classroom was that it was one that the children enjoyed. Most of the students completed their work in a relaxed and interested manner. If a child was having difficulty, Mary was available to help, provided that the child ask for help in the "proper" way. There were a great many distractions in the flow of the school day. In addition to my frequent visits, which the children acknowledged with friendly smiles from their seats, other teachers and staff were continually coming into the room. Kids were going in and out of the class to go to the nurse's office for cut fingers, bloody noses, etc.. None of these events seem to disturb the smooth flow of the room. Mary remained soft spoken and attentive to the children through it all. Carl was an integral part of the room. It would be impossible to identify him as "handicapped" in this setting.

Sally's style of discipline and structure are quite different, and often disturbing to my White, Middle class sensibilities. As in Mary's classroom, the mornings work is spelled out carefully and the children know exactly what is expected of them each day. The rules for proper behavior, in this case, as in the other, are well known, i.e., stay in your seat and complete your own work, silently. Unlike Mary, Sally is often harsh in her tone towards the children and shows a minimum degree of flexibility towards the children and any difficulty they may express regarding their work. I have no way of knowing whether or not she would yell, "shut-up and sit down," to all the children or does so only to those kids she feels need this way of being approached. In one instance, a child was helping another and she called out, "You shut-up, sit down and get into your own seat. If she don't know what to do, that's her problem and not yours." Sally's approach can best be summarized as, "no nonsense," and is symbolized by the physical environment of the classroom. The desks are in traditional rows, facing the front blackboard and the teacher's desk. There is no art-work in the room. The days assignments are written on the blackboard as are two short lists of names under the headings "No List" and "100 Club." These lists represent a behavior modification type approach used with the students. Being on the "No List" means losing priviledges, while the "100 Club" means a reward. Steve stood out in this room both because he was the only white youngster in this class and because he arrived late in the morning, staying only for one hour, to complete his reading assignment.

Both these women see their roles as often being surrogate-mother for many of their students. Mary approaches this role by her behavior towards the children in the classroom by being very nurturing and showing concern over their physical as well as intellectual and emotional well being. Sally, with all her harshness and apparent inflexibility, likewise sees herself and is seen by many of the children as a "mother-figure." One of the most striking ways that this is manifested is in her contact with each of the children's families. Whereas Mary only contacts families when there is a problem or on appointed conference days, Sally visits every home at the beginning of each year and continues to do so throughout the school year.

> "I go to every kids house and visit with their families. They really like that and it helps me to get to know the kids. They know that I'm in the neighborhood and can stop in anytime. Some of the families are real good and you can see it in the kids. These kids like me to see their parents too and the kids that are having problems don't feel like I'm just picking on them. ...You know when I can't figure out what's happening with a kid, when everything that I try here doesn't work, I'll go to the house again and it doesn't take me long to know what the problem is. I just go there, spend some time, look around and there it is, as clear as can be and I understand why this kid is having problems."

Like all "good teachers," Sally and Mary have the uncanny ability to know exactly what is going on in their classrooms at all times. By the time I visited the rooms, the children were aware of their teacher's scanning skills and knew that they had not bother trying "anything." The disciplinary techniques used by these women were identical; losing priviledges, staying after school, writing 100 times, "I must not...," or paddling. Paddling is seen as a last resort tactic and used both when the teacher is worn out and when she wants to scare either the offending child or the whole class. The children know what to expect and the teachers have equal expectations from all the children, regarding acceptable behavior. Mary expressed her feeling on this in the following way:

> "I think that it's just a matter of expectations an awful lot. I expect Carl to act just like the rest of them, absolutely, and I think what happens a lot of times is that people look at him and say, 'Oh, he's crazy, and they expect him to act that way or allow for some of it. And so, of course he does it. Kids do just about what you expect of them."

Sally expressed similar sentiments regarding her treatment of Steve. Both of these women contradict what Laurie stated earlier, referring to regular classroom teachers, "Because their expectations are that the kids are going to act bizarre. So much that they actually look for it." In fact, I found that the Learning Center teachers were more prone to this type of thinking than either of the two regular teachers that I met. Perhaps they are unique and it is these women's attitude towards their students that has aided in the "successful mainstreaming" of Carl and Steve.

It is interesting to compare the behavior of the children in the Learning Center to that of the students in the regular program, in order to get a more complete understanding of the issues involved in having these students return to a more normalized setting. Again however, I feel that it is important to point out that "Evars" does not represent the "normal" school environment from which these students came and to which they may eventually return. A total understanding of their behavior is impossible because of the inability to separate the "culture" of the Learning Center and its normative behavior and that which may be the "child's problem." The four classrooms here, which supposedly operate as a "team," have little contact with one another, except to send students to each others "Distar" groups. Each classroom has no more than ten students with a full-time teacher's aide and a Special Education teacher. The teacher turn-over rate here, as in other programs for Emotionally Disturbed children, is high. Of the four teachers, one is a Caucasian male, in his early thirties; two are Caucasian females, in their mid to late twenties, and another is a Black woman in her early twenties. None of the three women will be returning next year. Except for a new permanent "substitute," all are certified in Special Education. There are four female aides, two Black and two Caucasian, in their twenties or thirties. None of these women have had any formal training in working with "Emotionally Disturbed" children, although this was promised to one when she took the job. I observed these women as being very caring and warm and therefore able to provide a lot of the nurturing that many of the children here seem to long for. However, neither of the two that I closely observed had the skills or training necessary for the academic tasks they were often left to handle.

The "Social Work Aide," functions in the capacity of a social worker but is a certified Special Education teacher. She has, on several occasions, referred to herself as the "Principal of the Learning Center." Carlita, the building principal, sees her as the person who knows most about the workings of this program and is its organizer. Her office is located in the central part of the wing, so that she may see all the classes from her desk and any event that may be occurring in the hall. The rear of her office contains the "Time-Out" room, where children are sent if they have not been able to conform to the rules of their classroom and need to be separated from the rest. This hopefully cools off the child without giving him reinforcing attention as well as removing him from the room and the contaminating effect that his behavior may have on the other students. In my many visits here, the Time-Out room was always occupied and often, there were children sitting in Laurie's office as well. Because this section of the school is very old, it has a decaying feeling to it. There are attempts to cheer things up by a bulletin board which the children decorate and the occasional poster in the hall and childrens' art work.

Laurie is a woman in her late twenties, thin and casually but expensively dressed. She looks as though she might have a "Eurasian" heritage, with dark hair and almond shaped eyes. She continually chain smokes in her office and is usually drinking a soft drink or eating candy. She tells me repeatedly that she hates her job and wished she would get fired. Her primary role here was intended to be that of a liaison between the home and the school. However, she reports that she rarely makes home visits except if she needs to have papers signed or if a child is having severe problems. She sees herself as having "burned-out" after one year of trying to deal with the parents to get things done for the kids. Now, she will only spend time with "good parents," i.e., those that are receptive to her suggestions and will go along with what the school wants for their kid. She sees a lot of the problem behaviors that the kids exhibit as the result of their home environment. "They grow up in aggressive homes and in aggressive neighborhoods. And they are role modeling the roles they have to model."

Both Steve and Carl's parents are seen by Laurie as being generally cooperative. She feels that most of the parents will go along with whatever they are told, when the recommendation for mainstreaming is made. This certainly was the case as far as Steve's mother is concerned. Her response to my question about her feelings toward Steve's program was, "Whatever the teachers say is best for him is O.K. with me." Both Laurie and Dave see her as, "One of the better parents." The issue in Carl's case is somewhat more complicated and is one that Laurie says she has seen before. After a short time in the Learning Center, his teacher felt that Carl was ready to be mainstreamed, as he wasn't exhibiting any of the bizarre and babyish type temper tantrums that had been evidenced at his former school. It was recommended that he be put on the "nine week" mainstreaming, with the goal at the end of this period to be his return to his former school. Mrs. F. agreed and he did well all along this process. When the COH meeting was called and she was called in for what everyone was sure would be a blanket approval of his return, she did a "turn-around" and asked that he remain in this setting. No one is really sure what caused her to change her mind but Laurie feels that she never really understood the nature of Carl's placement.

> "And often times we get, 'I don't want my kid moved. I want him to stay in a small classroom.' Those are the hardest ones to work with because they don't see moving as a positive thing. ...What I have to do, it's my job, to go out and tell them where the school is coming from. And sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. ...A lot of them were upset by the way it was presented to them by the other school. You know, what the other school told them about why their kid is coming here in the first place. Well, you'd also be amazed at how many parents have no idea why their kids are here. They think that they're here because it's a small classroom and they can learn better."

Whatever Mrs. F.'s motives, Carl was allowed to remain at Evars and was officially changed to "full-year mainstreamed." He comes to the Learning Center now only for a half-hour a day "Distar Language" lesson, as he is far behind the other students in Mary's second grade language group.

As a result of her experiences last year with the students here, Laurie has come to have certain expectations about the kinds of things that work. One morning I observed a child being paddled and verbally assaulted by both Laurie and his teacher. The teacher had obviously been pushed to her limit by the entire class which had been hurling obsenities at her. This White, well dressed, reading teacher had just taken over the class as a replacement for the former teacher who had recently resigned. Humiliating the child seemed to be the only way that both women could vent their frustration and anger and then return to more of the same. Laurie's perspective on this incident and the use of physical force is that it is necessary because this is the approach used at home and therefore the only thing that works.

Betty Olds feels differently:

> "I have stopped paddling and the kids have quieted down. In Mary's room, it may calm the kids down but here it only makes things worse. Here, kids are beaten often and inconsistently at home. They have a low tolerance for frustration, just as many of their parents do. Many of the parents seem confused, maybe in between jobs and wrapped in their own problems. Of the nine kids in this room, only one lives with both parents and they are racially mixed and this causes a lot of problems for this kid."

The use of physical force as a method of handling aggressive behavior presents the obvious paradox of, "violence breeding violence." If this method really "worked," then the aggressive behavior exhibited by the Learning Center students should have been extinguished by this point in the school year. It is certainly a fact that the children in this program see "mainstreaming" as an opportunity to get away from the possibility of being paddled, as Steve and Carl and several other Learning Center students have indicated to me.

Betty Old's Learning Center class is the first room on the left as you enter the wing, and directly next door to Laurie's office. She is a young Caucasian woman, well groomed and madeup, but casually dressed. This is her second year as a teacher, both of which have been here. This room was once used as a regular classroom and so is quite large. The space is separated into three sections by permanently installed dividers. The teacher's desk is at the front of the room and the aide's desk at the back. The children's desks are located in the space you first see upon entering the room, and it is here that they complete most of their work. The other two sections of the room are used for "Distar" and other individual lessons. The room is decorated with posters and other commercially made materials. In spite of these attempts to decorate, the room has the same shabby feeling that one gets throughout the Learning Center. At the front of the room, taped to the blackboard is the "Good Times" chart, an elaborate points system whereby the children can obtain priviledge or buy things at the "store" for exhibiting "appropriate behavior." Unlike the expectations of the teachers I spoke with in the regular program, Betty has individualized her behavioral expectations for each child. Next to each child's name are several sentences indicating what is expected of him in order to get "points."

> "This is my version of class rules. But I don't like having class rules because some kids can meet all the rules and still not be growing and other kids could never hope to. So each kid has their own set of rules. ...It's difficult for me to keep my standards in line, you know, I don't want to set them too high. But I don't want to compromise either so it's a constant battle. So in other words, I would love them to be like Mary's class but if I expected that of them, it would be mass mutiny. Well, most of them any way. I'm not saying that just because they were referred here they are automatically bad, but for some of them, it is the case. They can't do it, that's why they're here in the first place."

The behavior exhibited by the children in this classroom is beyond a doubt far from what would be expected or tolerated in either of the two regular classrooms I observed. The children are continually calling out, disrupting each other, and often show total disregard for either Betty or her aide. My presence at first, was totally disruptive to them. One of the boys was convinced that I was "looking at him," and became particularly disturbed by this. Even after the boys were use to my presence and I had a chance to observe a "good day," it was far from what I witnessed in the regular classroom setting. The supposed "structure" of the class was constantly disrupted by the children's arguments with each other. For the most part, Betty seemed ineffectual during these outbursts and the "point" system seemed to have no effect on the boys behavior. I did not observe this "behavior modification" program being used in any consistent fashion.

How then was Carl able to get out of this setting and be "successfully mainstreamed?" The answer to this seems to lie in the fact that this was probably never a child who was truly "emotionally disturbed." His records indicate that he is somewhat limited intellectually and has some mild perceptual deficits. He and his twin sister, who is quite a bit brighter than him, were bused to a school in the University section. The academic demands were probably too stringent and it is generally felt that the relationship he had with his teacher was poor. Carl has a good deal of difficulty verbalizing his feelings and is often able to manipulate by throwing temper tantrums. He did this at his new school, often screaming in the hallways. He was referred for psychological testing, labeled SED and sent to the Learning Center, back in his old neighborhood school. Betty was convinced that he didn't belong in this setting after only a short period of observing Carl in this setting. Carl himself told me that he wanted out of the Learning Center because kids are paddled there. Although he never was paddled, he was terrified of the prospect, having seen it done to other kids. Fortunately, he was not in Mary's class early in the year when she too paddled kids, occasionally. When he did have some difficulty in Mary's class, she stood her guns with him rather than sending him back to the Learning Center because she did not see him as that different from many of the other children in her class. Carl is now "unofficially" considered to be a full-time student in Mary's class, coming to her room from the bus and staying there for all but one half hour when he returns to Betty's room for "Distar Language." Communication between the two women is now very limited.

Steve has been in the Learning Center for almost three years. He is officially a student in Dan B's room and is taking part in the "full-year mainstreaming" program. This was begun in the Spring of this year with the hope that his time in Sally's room could be gradually increased until the end of the school year, with the goal of his returning to a regular program in the Fall. During my time here, he spent one half hour in Sally's room for reading and after two weeks, added another one half hour for math. Sally, Steve and Dan still consider him to be Dan's student, however. Dan, a man in his early thirties, tall, medium built and casually dressed in jeans, has been a Special Education teacher for ten years and has developed a style of interacting with his students that is probably most responsible for Steve's "success" than any programmatic approaches that I witnessed in his room. The students in this class were somewhat older than Betty's students and therefore do not exhibit the immature responses that I witnessed there. Rather, these pre-adolescent boys are more into playing tough and challenging each other with their prowess. Again, the behavior I observed in this setting would not be tolerated by Betty. They are continually out of their seats, wandering around the room and calling out. The slightest distraction seems to take each student off track and again my presence, which practically went unnoticed in either of the regular classrooms, was the source of a good deal of discussion and bold confrontation. "Hey lady, what you writing? You a reporter? Hey, man I think she's a reporter."

The classroom was again a full sized room, divided by a partition into a section for the students desks, a reading section, and a corner in the right hand side of the room where Dan kept his desk and at which he worked individually with some of the boys or had "private discussions" with them. The decorations in the room seemed somewhat inappropriate; scenes from "Life in the 1800's" which showed Currier and Ives prints of White people's lives and none that indicated that slavery even existed. There were pictures from a calendar of scenes from places around the world which barely related to the seasons as these boys experience them. On the front board was the chart for this classes' point system, which I did not observe being used. There were several newsprint posters at the side of the room that looked as if they had been part of an "affective education" lesson. As in Betty's room, there was a scarcity of materials and that shabby Learning Center ambiance.

I knew that Steve had been here for a long time and that he was sent because of his highly volatile and aggressive personality. Dan explained how he came to the decision to try Steve in the "Full-year mainstreaming" program.

> Me: "What made you feel that Steve was ready? What made you come to that decision?"
>
> Dan: "All right. One of the major things we have in here is that minor squabbles between kids can develop into major catastrophes. Everybody is quick to respond verbally to someone else's troubles, and Steve got to a point where he was able to ignore those behaviors if he was working on something. He could keep on task, and if he got off, all I'd have to do was say 'Steve, will you keep busy?' And he'd go right back to work. He didn't continue on. Some of the kids can't stop; once they get into the rut it keeps building up, building up, building up until I have to remove them to some place. Steve got to the point where he wouldn't indulge himself in those kind of things. Another thing was that he got a lot more confident in his work. He would accept it. He use to complain a lot, 'This is too hard, this is...' Before he even saw what he had to do, he would complain about it. And that dwindled almost completely. And then in activities like going on field trips and programs in gym and stuff he was able to handle himself."
>
> Me: "In less structured kinds of things?"
>
> Dan: "Right. For periods of time without getting carried away on things. And just all those things together. Plus we've been talking about it. Steve was one of the ones who was scheduled to be mainstreamed. Last years teacher had recommended that sometime this year we might want to try. So its been something thats been talked about with Steve."

Dan then explained the procedure that was followed once he decided that Steve was ready.

> "If I have somebody that I think is ready then I go to Jean, the instructional specialist. And she will work out a placement. If one is available, and then when she does that, I will sit down with the regular teacher, Jean and myself and the regular teacher will discuss the kid, what levels he's functioning at in here, where we

> think he would fit, things that I think are important, you know, reinforcement things that work with him or negative things that work maybe a stare or whatever it might be. And then after that, it's just a matter of setting up a schedule with that teacher. I usually just go up to see Sally once or twice a week."

This is the same procedure that had been described to me by Betty and Jean and is generally followed in the case of all children to be "mainstreamed."

In Steve's case, as in Carl's, there was a period when at the beginning of the process, Steve began to "act-out" fighting with some other students in the cafeteria and refusing to go "upstairs" for reading. He had to be removed and placed in the time-out room, "out-of-control." He broke down and began to cry and told Laurie that he didn't want to go to the regular fourth grade class because he missed Dan and was sure he wouldn't see him again if he was sent to the other room. Steve and Dan were able to work this out but this is still a difficult situation for Steve to face and he did not want to discuss that series of events with me. It is obviously very difficult for many children to separate from the person that has, through their relationship, offered them the confidence and support they may otherwise lack. It is essential, in order for mainstreaming to be "successful" for children with emotional problems, that communication remain in tact between those adults with whom the child has had positive relationships. The adults must, at the same time, be willing to cut loose the parent-like ties that they often develop and transfer these ties to other adults and hopefully back to the parents, when possible. I asked Steve how Dan helped him to not feel so bad about leaving and he said, "Well, he helped me and said she ain't mean and ugly. He said it would be a big step for me and that my mother would be real proud of me."

The question that remains unanswered, regarding the actual success of the mainstreaming process at this school is whether or not the children who have been integrated into "Evars" will be able to be "successfully" integrated into a more "normal" school situation, i.e., a White-middle class school with

White middle-class expectations. Things that "work" here by providing the firm structure and discipline that many of the staff feel are essential for this population of children are often not found in other settings. The price paid by limiting the choices these children have each day and exposing them to learning by only using rote, regimented approaches, is symbolized by the windows found in every classroom throughout "Evars." They are wired, translucent plastic which only let in a minimal amount of light, limiting the distractions created by the reality that lies outside of this building, while also limiting the children's capacity for creative thought which they will need one day, in order to cope with this reality.

CHAPTER 8

"The Other 10%: Integration In A Pre-School Program"

Sandy Mlinarcik

"If You Get The Right Teacher, You Can Do Anything."

INTRODUCTION

Starting in 1966, the New York State Board of Regents gave financial assistance to school districts for operating Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) programs in the public schools. Under the program fifty Pre-K programs have been created. The State Education Department provides 89% of the funding. The State regulations mandates 90% of the families served, meet at least one of the following criteria:

- family on AFDC
- family on relief
- family eligible for medicaid
- family with foster children
- family with high density of population per dwelling
- family residence in remote rural areas
- family with chronic illness
- family with record of limited school achievement
- single parent family
- frequent change of address

Guidelines from the State provide a model for service delivery. This model incorporates the curriculum, evaluation of progress, parent involvement, and health and social services which characterize all of the State's Pre-K programs.

The Pre-K program, which was selected for this study, is one of the largest in the State. It has been in operation since 1973 and has served children with the following kinds of handicapping conditions:

hearing impaired, Down Syndrome, dwarfism, autism, language delayed, developmentally delayed, intellectually delayed and physically impaired". According to its present director, this Pre-K program accepts children with disabilities by choice, for it is not required by state guidelines.

This study presents a description of the part of the Pre-K program located in Marshview Elementary School. Interviews with program participants and classroom observations focused on the total learning environment and the experiences of five children who were mainstreamed into Marshview's Pre-K classes.

THE SCHOOL SETTING

Marshview is located in a central school district which includes suburban residential neighborhoods, farms and state recreation land, and industrial parks. The school is accessible by local streets, which wind through shopping malls, warehouses, and railroad yards, as well as by an express highway. Not visible from the main road, a long, tree-lined drive leads from the road to a large, oval-shaped lot which separates two, practically identical buildings. Marshview's K-3 classes are in one of the buildings, while 4-7 classes are located in the other.

The buildings are modern, one-story, brick and glass structures. The surrounding flat, open fields are edged with pine trees, and they provide a striking change of scenery to the busy streets which led to the schools. Without the cues provided by tennis and basketball courts alongside the grade 4-7 building, the setting could be mistaken for an insurance company or a group of medical offices.

All of the children who attend Marshview, including the children enrolled in the Pre-K program, are Caucasian. While the district's population is made up of a variety of ethnic groups, only a very small percentage of the district's population is comprised of minority groups.

Inside Marshview Elementary

The school building in which the pre-school program is housed is square with a glass-enclosed patio, in the center. Architecturally it is an "open" school, without walls to separate the interior into classrooms, corridors, and offices. Completely carpeted, the environment is unusually quiet. Plants, artwork, and books are attractively displayed on walls and makeshift divides.

Although the school was built to be open, teachers have created classrooms with their own walls. File cabinets, bookcases and desks are arranged in such a way that space is sectioned off. Childrens' desks are arranged in rows facing in ways to make rooms. The gym, kindergarten and offices are structurally enclosed and located at one end of the school. At the opposite end of the building are the Pre-K classes, referred to as Marshview I and II. Marshview I is a large, open space set off from the rest of the school by lockers and lavatory walls. Marshview II occupies what had once been the three enclosed special education classrooms. There is an outside entrance close to Marshview I. Only the Pre-K classes use this door when going and coming.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRE-K PROGRAM AND MARSHVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Pre-K program rents its space from the school district, and other than occupying space, operates independently from the school. The Pre-K classrooms are physically separate and do not follow the regular school schedule. Meals are prepared and eaten in the classrooms rather than in the school cafeteria. The separateness of the Pre-K program is evident at the administrative level as well. The director is like a principal, hiring, firing and responsible for Marshview as well as two other pre-school centers.

Differences in educational approaches between the pre-school and the rest of Marshview are perceived by the Pre-K director as further contributing to the separateness of the program. As the director said:

> "Well, we're really separate. Except for the guidelines from the state, I can do what I like. The curriculum from the state is quite specific - it's not bad really. They want it to be very activity oriented - interest areas, cooking, art - more like the British infant schools. None of the real structured, academic stuff you see in kindergartens now, a real emphasis on social skills. Our classrooms are really different from the rest of the school."

THE ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL OF THE PRE-K CLASSES

Characteristics of the Marshview Pre-K Program

When I studied the program it was serving 132 children in six classes. In compliance with the New York State guidelines, 90% of the children are either from low income families or from families meeting one of the criteria previously described. It is open to children who reach their third birthday on or before December first. Four year old children are given priority for admission.

The four Pre-K classes at Marshview Elementary provide a four day program. Home visits are scheduled for every Friday. The two classes in Marshview I have a head teacher, three assistants, and twenty four children. The two classes in Marshview II are functioning without a head teacher due to a budget cut. In each of these classes, there are eighteen children and three assistants. One of the assistants is a certified teacher, who has been designated "unit leader" by the program director. The 6:1 ratio of children to staff is required by the state education department guidelines.

The daily program at the Marshview Pre-K is two and one half hours long, with the arrival and dismissal times staggered as follows:

Marshview I	8:00 - 10:30 a.m. 11:30 - 2:00 p.m.
Marshview II	8:45 - 11:15 a.m. 12:15 - 2:45 p.m.

Each day the children receive a meal and snack. The daily program is described by the director as "a balance of structured, unstructured, large and small groups and individualized activities." The Pre-K program provides vision and hearing screenings, which are done by the program's nurse. A full-time speech therapist, who provides services to all six Pre-K classes, is also employed by the program.

The Pre-K Director and Her Relationship to the Program

The director Rita Marcus, is petite and attractive and looks younger than her age of forty five. Ms. Marcus has an extremely efficient, no-nonsense manner. She speaks rapidly, answering questions at great length and with no hesitation. Prior to directing the Pre-K program, she taught in the primary grades and completed a graduate program in educational administration. Her motivation in becoming an administrator was "to change how things are for a lot of kids". Ms. Marcus has a clear idea about how things *should* be. She views her position as an administrator to be an opportunity to implement the educational values and perspective which she holds. Ms. Marcus speaks with enthusiasm and unconditional positive regard for the Pre-K program, staff, and her own efforts.

Ms. Marcus describes her administrative style as "open":

> "Okay, one thing that I should mention is that I sort of have an open administration, I do, I shouldn't say sort of, I do. I really try to bridge any gaps there might have been before previous directors and the staff. I want teachers to feel open, you know, to come and talk to me, I have been open in the things that I do. No one had ever discussed budgets with the staff before, and last year no one ever knew what numbers, what figures, what cuts, and I'm very open, maybe it's because maybe I feel I shouldn't be the only one that should be worried - might as well have twenty people worried!"

Ms. Marcus is adamant and clear in her opinion of how a school administrator's role should be carried out:

> "I think an administrator has to be a teacher first - and continue to be a teacher. I don't think anybody can sit in an office and direct a program or direct a school by being in a closed office. So, perhaps my first goal is to be in classrooms with kids and teachers - it's the only way I can see what's good and what needs to be changed and what shouldn't be changed. I also feel that I should be, I feel myself that an administrator should be a master teacher, now a lot of people don't agree with me, but I believe if we're going to direct teachers and kids - help teachers grow - there has to be a model, just as teachers are models for kids, I think principals should be models for teachers, and so I do lessons in the classrooms; along my own interests, music happens to be one, so I do music lessons, I'm also interested in language and reading and so I did a special reading program, which I think I mentioned to you, earlier in the year."

Just as Ms. Marcus has identified parent involvement and open, individualized education as priorities in her administration, so has she identified mainstreaming:

> Observer:
>
> "Rita, could you explain how the children who are mainstreamed get into your program. They're not part of that 90% mandate from the state, right?"
>
> Director:
>
> "No, they're not. The state guidelines say that 90% of the youngsters accepted into the program must come from low-income families. That leaves me 10% to play around with. So, I use that 10% to mainstream handicapped youngsters. Several times we've taken a youngster with a handicap even though we were full."

Observer:

"The state Pre-K program is different from Headstart in that 10% then."

Director:

"That's right. The state doesn't say I have to accept children with handicaps, but it's a priority of mine, so I can do it. I'm my own boss...if there's a youngster with a handicap referred to me, I talk it over with my staff and then decide if we can take the child."

Observer:

"So, the autonomy you have makes the mainstreaming possible..."

Director:

"Absolutely! If I had to work through the district offices...forget it. No, I'm my own boss. Thank God!"

THE MARSHVIEW I CLASSES

The Teaching Staff

The team is made up of a lead teacher and three assistants. The lead teacher, Diane Kennedy, is approximately thirty five years of age and has taught kindergarten and primary classes, off and on, for twelve years. Ms. Kennedy is slender, blonde, and soft spoken. She has a calm, controlled manner of speaking and moving in the classroom. Ms. Kennedy gracefully moves throughout the classroom, occasionally making a comment or responding to a child's question, or redirecting the children's behavior, when necessary, to keep it within appropriate limits.

> (Two boys pushed a large wooden wagon out of the block area and came scooting, very fast, across the entire length of the room.) Ms. Kennedy: "Jeffery and Mike, that's not the way we use that. I want you to bring it back to the block area. Let me see how carefully you can drive it over...then come help me in the art area. I'll need some help at the water table." (The boys returned to the block area with the wagon and went over to Ms. Kennedy. She asked them to fill the water table. The boys appeared delighted with this task. They put on rubber aprons, filled plastic pails at the sink, and emptied them into the water table.)

While pleasant and warm with the children, Ms. Kennedy's interactions remain controlled, and, at times, she appears to be more of an observer than participant.

Two of the teacher assistants, Ms. Panski and Ms. Dunn, closely resemble Ms. Kennedy in age, appearance, and manner. The third assistant is the oldest member of the team, approximately fifty years of age. Ms. Stanton dresses more casually than the others, and her interactions with the children are more animated and spontaneous. She is the only member of the team who sits on the floor and becomes engaged in the children's play.

The Children

There are twenty four children aged four and five years in both the morning and afternoon classes. All of the children are bussed. The majority of the children appear healthy, clean, and neatly dressed. Only two children, a boy and a girl, stand out because of their neglected appearnace. On each visit these two children had uncombed hair, dirty mismatched clothing which did not fit them, and very active colds.

The children initiate a lot of their own activity, with little direction from the teachers, chattering to each other and moving freely from one area to another. They play in small groups of two and three, as well as forming groups as large as twelve for certain activities.

Three children have been mainstreamed in the Marshview I classes. In the morning session, there are two children who are identified as having special needs; Craig, a four year old with cystic fibrosis, and Beth, a five year old girl, who is legally blind. Aimee, a five year old girl who attends the afternoon session, has a profound hearing loss and has recently been fitted with the first of her hearing aids. All three children receive special services. Twice a week Craig attends the Cerebral Palsy Center in the afternoon for occupational therapy.

These sessions were soon to be terminated, however. An itinerant teacher for the blind comes to work with Beth less than once a week. The speech therapist, employed by the Pre-K program, provides one-to-one speech and language therapy to Aimee three times a week.

The Classroom Environment

Marshview I has a large, open, rectangular space. Windows run the length of the room. The floor is covered in rust-colored wall-to-wall carpeting, with the exception of a tiled art area in one corner.

The room is divided into the following areas: science, manipulatives (e.g. puzzles, pegboards, sorting materials); art and waterplay; sand; housekeeping (toy appliances, broom and mop, telephones); reading; and blocks. Each area is well stocked with accessories which provide the children with many choices of activities.

All of the furniture and room dividers are movable.

Large, open space is available in the center of the room. The two side walls are covered with bulletin boards. Posters of numbers, colors, seasons, and shapes are mounted at the childrens' eye-level. There is one display for each session, a.m. and p.m., entitled "Child of the Week."

A kitchen area is partitioned off, and this is where the teaching team prepares the meals and snacks. A large sink is located at the entrance to the kitchen area, and wooden staircases, on either side of the sink, make the sink accessible to the children.

A huge rabbit hutch, with legs, stands in the center of the room. One of the parents built the hutch, and a large gray rabbit makes its home in it. The wire mesh on the hutch has openings in it which are large enough to allow the children to pet and feed the rabbit.

Four large tables are lined up in front of the children's cubbies, one for each of the teaching staff. The children eat at these tables, as well as meet in groups of six for activities directed by the teachers.

Organization and Daily Activities

Each adult on the teaching team of Marshview I is designated as a "locker teacher" for a group of six children. "Locker" refers to the storage unit where the children hang their coats and store the papers and toys which go back and forth between their homes and school. The "locker teacher" assumes the main responsibility for the children in her "locker group." This responsibility includes home visits, periodic assessments and recordkeeping required by the state, greeting the children upon arrival, serving the daily meal, and providing small group instruction. The "locker teacher" is assumed to have a good sense of the needs, abilities, and progress of the children in her group. (Ms. Kennedy was leaning against the partition in the block area and the observer walked over to her.)

Observer:

"The children really are busy, Diane."

Ms. Kennedy:

"(laughing) Oh, they love to play. Making a train in this area is the big thing since our fieldtrip to Rome by train."

Observer:

"How is Aimee doing?"

Ms. Kennedy:

"Okay, I guess. You'll probably want to talk with Ms. Panski, she's Aimee's locker teacher."

(The observer later asked the same question of Ms. Panski.)

Observer:

"How do you think Aimee is doing?"

Ms. Panski:

"Skill wise she's really doing okay; there's some catching up she needs to do, like with categories, her language. She was more playing alongside the other kids. I had to almost push her a bit to get into things. She wasn't too active. Now, there's one other little girl who she seems to have paired up with. I don't know if it's Kate taking Aimee in or vice versa, but it's good for both of them. She talks more to Kate when they're off at something together. See them over at that table - that's Kate. (The two girls and one boy were using magic markers on some coloring book pages.) I think Aimee just needs some more time."

The daily schedule is the same for both the morning and afternoon sessions. Upon arrival and being greeted by their locker teachers, the children are allowed approximately twenty minutes of "free play." During this time, only some of the activity areas are open: the sand table with its assortment of scoops, funnels and containers; blocks and trucks; a large wooden alphabet board with movable pieces; manipulatives; and housekeeping. Two members of the team are always occupied in the kitchen area at this time preparing the breakfast or lunch, while the other two staff are circulating throughout the room. Frequently at this time, a locker teacher may take an individual child out of the room for an assessment, such as the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, or the entire locker group may leave to get weighed and measured by the nurse. The childrens' play is active and self-initiated, and they move freely around the room, with little teacher guidance.

"Free play" is followed by breakfast or lunch. Ms. Kennedy announces "clean-up time" and the children typically respond quickly by putting things away in whatever area they are playing in at that moment. Ms. Kennedy walks through the room, recalling children to certain items which have been left out. Again, with little or no direction, the children independently wash their hands at the sink in the room and seat themselves where they choose at their "locker tables." The children are allowed anything they request from the table, and several choices are always available. For example, one day lunch consisted of soup, sandwiches, orange slices and milk. The children assembled their own sandwiches, choosing from bologna, cheese, lettuce, mayonnaise and mustard. Soup was served upon request, and the children pour their own milk from pint cartons.

> At Ms. Kennedy's lunch table there is one boy with a very runny nose. Ms. Kennedy has asked him to get some tissues and wipe his nose. He complains that he already did, but Ms. Kennedy responds with "I know, Joey, and you need to do it again." Ms. Kennedy speaks quietly, with patience, and seems to scan the room with her eyes occasionally while talking to the children at her table. She encourages conversation at the table between the children, suggesting to the child next to her that she tell another child across the table about her new pet.
>
> One of the other assistants is showing the sign language labels for the food on the table, combining the signs for orange and tree, etc.. The children seem to be enjoying this, and one child, in particular, seemed quite proficient.

The routine after lunch seems well-established. The children clean up their own places with sponges and a small bucket of water. After the children move to the block area and sit on the rug and mats , one of the teachers leads a large group activity at this time; e.g. reading a story, finger-plays, records.

Following the large group activity, the children have "play choices." Ms. Kennedy announces the choices that are available, including one or two special activities, such as planting seeds, which are also available. All of the staff are in the room at this time, and they facilitate the childrens' activities by assisting with materials, making positive comments, and helping to settle any disagreements that might arise. It is apparent that pairs of children, small groups, and favorite activities had all been formed throughout the school year. There was no hesitation about who was going to play with whom, or where.

> Kate grabbed a hold of Aimee by the arm, and they were off to the art area. Kate went to a shelf and hauled out a large plastic bowl - asking Ms. Kennedy: "We want playdough, Ms. Kennedy. Can we do playdough?" Ms. Kennedy responded with "Sure," instructed the girls to wear smocks, and took a picture recipe for playdough off a shelf. The recipe had simple blackline drawings for containers labeled flour, salt, etc.. The two girls went into the kitchen area and took some plastic containers down from a lower shelf, carried them to the art area, and proceeded to open them, using the measuring cups from inside the containers. Ingredients spilled a bit on the table, and Ms. Kennedy intervened at this point:
>
> "Girls, look at the recipe. This one is the flour (pointing to the picture). Which container has this word - flour - on it? Can you show me?"
>
> Kate quickly pulled the correct container toward her, "two cups, I do one first, then you." Aimee did not respond verbally, but stood close by and put both hands into the bowl. Ms. Kennedy observed the playdough makers, occasionally, from several feet away. Kate took charge, continuing to give Aimee directions. They were joined by two more girls, who put on smocks and started working the sticky mixture in their hands. One of them called out, "Ms. Kennedy, this playdough's too sticky." Ms. Kennedy suggested that they put some flour on their hands. The mixing and kneading continued. Aimee was not talking to the other children, but she was very involved in the activity, smiling, doing her share of the mixing.

Children are directed to their locker tables after "play choices" for a fifteen to twenty minute activity, which is directed by the locker teacher. Readiness work with numbers and letters, categorizing objects, or fine motor activities such as cutting and pasting are typically done at this time.

> The task for locker groups today was to draw a picture of a person whom they liked. At each table, the teachers reviewed all the names of the body parts, from head, facial features, to wrist, knees, ankles. The children were given large sheets of paper and pencils. Ms. Panski asked each child "who are you drawing?" Answers ranged from "my grandpa" to "you." The children completed the task with verbal prompting from Ms. Panski "what else does your grandpa heve on his face," "what kind of hair does she have - long, short, curly..?" As each child finished, Ms. P. dated their drawings and piled them in front of her.

(The observer was seated near Ms. Panski's table.)

> "Oh, they've come a long way. We have to get these for the state. Do you want to see some earlier ones?" She hauled out a large cardboard box which had a file for each child in the class.

> Specimen drawings of a person had been taken four times throughout the year, and Albany requests a random sample from each pre-K program.

Following the locker group activity, the children have a simple snack and prepare for the bus ride home. Weather permitting, each locker teacher takes her group outdoors to play about ten minutes prior to the buses' arrival. There is one hour between the morning and afternoon sessions, during which the teaching team has lunch, sets up the activity areas, and makes parent contacts by letter or phone.

THE MARSHVIEW II CLASS

The Teaching Staff

There are three teacher assistants on the Marshview II classroom team. One of the assistants, Lorin Hawley, has been designated as "unit leader." According to the Pre-K director, the title of unit leader is meant to recognize the fact that Ms. Hawley is a certified teacher, although the current budget only allows her an assistant's salary.

Lorin Hawley is about thirty five years old, blonde, and quite overweight. She has a loud laugh and pleasant manner. Although Lorin Hawley is unit leader, much of the responsibility for organizing and carrying out the daily activities seems to be assumed by Marge Phipps, who is extremely energetic and efficient. She speaks rapidly in a loud voice, which can easily be heard throughout the classroom. Ms. Phipps is about forty five years old, slender, and auburn-haired. She has worked in the Pre-K program for several years, but had no formal training in teaching previously. The third member of the team is Lila Sorenson. Ms. Sorenson is in her late forties, heavy-set, and very fair-skinned. She speaks in a high, tiny voice. Ms. Sorenson often prepares the meals, while the other team members are with the children for large group activities.

A fourth team member, Mary Lou Anceti, works half-time in the Pre-K program. She was hired to attend the morning session with Allison, a girl who was to be mainstreamed into Marshview II's, a.m. class. Earlier in the year, Mary Lou Anceti spent a great deal of time with Allison, working on a one-to-one basis. Now that the student functions independently much of the time, Ms. Anceti serves as a teacher aide. She spends most of her time preparing bulletin board displays, straightening up the materials, and filling in when one of the teacher assistants is out. Mary Lou is tall and slender, and about twenty one years old.

The Marshview II staff differs from that of Marshview I in their style of interacting with the children and with each other. All of the people in Marshview II have less experience both in teaching in general and in this particular Pre-K program. They are more directive with the children and have firmer limits for acceptable behavior.

Ms. Phipps:

"Ok, boys and girls. Listen carefully. When I call your locker group, you go with your locker teacher and line up at the door. We're going outside. All the children in Ms. Sorenson's locker group may go"

(Ms. Phipps pauses while these six children gather themselves up and get into line.)

"Ok, now the children in Ms. Hawley's locker group may go." Allison is in the group but does not get up to leave with the children. She is gazing at the wall but appears to be listening. "Ms. Hawley, do you have everyone in your locker group?"

Ms. Hawley:

"No, I don't. I need one more person, but I don't think I can wait."

Ms. Phipps:

"Allison, who is your locker teacher?"

Allison:

(who has a severe speech impairment) answers with an approximation of "Ms. Hawley."

> Ms. Phipps:
>
> "Why didn't you stand up when I said your locker group? I guess you'll have to sit here by yourself while the other children go."
>
> Allison begins to cry.
>
> Ms. Phipps:
>
> "Maybe next time you'll remember to stand up. Ok, the children in Ms. Phipp's group, let's go get ready."
>
> Allison continues crying and starts to get up off the floor but is told she must stay there.

In general, the tone which the teachers create is less spontaneous, with a greater emphasis on completion of specific skill activities.

One characteristic the Marshview I and II teachers have in common, however, is an ability to work smoothly and cooperatively on a team. Each person is aware of her responsibilities and fulfills them efficiently. The success of the program, according to the director, is a result of successfully staffing the classes:

> Director:
>
> "Here we have a very neat program, because we have four teachers in every - or three or four teachers in every classroom. The teacher is not isolated, so I have to, when I "pick teams," I have to match personalities and strengths, and weaknesses and talents so that we have a nice balance in our staff."

The Children

There are eighteen children in the Marshview II a.m. class. The afternoon class was not observed for this study. All of the children, ten boys and eight girls, are Caucasian and four or five years old. They all ride the bus to and from school. The entire group appears healthy, clean, and very neatly dressed. Each child wears a name tag and bus number, which hangs from a piece of yarn worn around the neck.

Although these children are equivalent in age to the group in Marshview I, they demonstrate a number of behaviors which make them appear younger: e.g., two children such their thumgs; others crawling into their teachers' laps; and more children wait for an adult's guidance before engaging in play. Two children have been mainstreamed into the class. Bobby, who is four years old, has attended Pre-K for just over a year. He was described by the Pre-K director as "developmentally delayed."

Director:

"He has a total developmental delay of at least two years. They don't really know what caused it. He had Hylen membrane disease at birth. He may be EMR. Bobby's at the CP center two days a week for therapy, but his progress is very slow."

Observer:

"Can you tell me what you mean by total developmental delay?"

Director:

"He's just functioning like a much younger child. He started everything later, like talking. His gross motor is way behind what it should be. He's still falling a lot."

Allison is the other child who was mainstreamed into the Marshview II class. Allison is five years old, and she entered the Pre-K program in September. She will be starting kindergarten in the fall. Allison also attends the Cerebral Palsy Clinic for an afternoon speech and language program. The teacher of the afternoon program had referred Allison to the Pre-K director.

Director:

"In the Woodland II morning group, we have two children - one of them, Allison, came with an aide. That was a condition I made for her to be admitted into the program. We've had to do that before. I think that, maybe the aide will only be necessary for the first couple of months, that's the way it worked out in Angela's case, and then the aide can help out with the other kids and free up one of the teachers to give extra attention to a child like Allison."

Observer:

"Why did you think Allison needed an aide?"

Director:

"She was down as language delayed. Children with language delays can have so many other problems. Allison was at the CP center in the PALS program, and she had to be restrained for the first two months there."

Observer:

"Can you say more about that?"

Director:

"They had to tie her in a wheelchair. She was totally out of control, just wild and unmanageable. So I said that she'd have to come with an aide into this program. We really needed the aide at first, but now she's just another assistant in the room. Remember I mentioned that one room didn't have a head teacher and only eighteen kids. That's the class with the aide."

Observer:

"It sounds like Allison has settled into your program."

Director:

"Oh, that girl is a different child. She's come a long way, but her language is still practically unintelligible. Mary Lou, the aide, can understand every word she says, but no one else can."

The Classroom Environment

The Marshview II classes occupy a suite of three rooms; i.e., two large carpeted classrooms with a complete kitchen separating them. A bathroom is also included in the suite of rooms. A special education class for "the trainably mentally handicapped," now located in another building, had occupied the rooms previously. The first large classroom is referred to as the "large activity room." It contains very little furniture. An old upright piano is positioned just inside the door to the room. Half of the room is the block area, containing shelves with blocks of all sizes and a wooden train set with tracks. A sandtable is positioned alongside the block area, with black plastic taped down on the carpeting beneath it. A large open area has been left in the center of the room. The bulletin board, which runs the length of the wall, has been sectioned off into three displays: a large winter scene with the title "We Play in Winter"; a birthday theme with a gift box for each child labeled with name and date; and an "Information for Parents" collection of newspaper articles regarding nutrition and parenting practices.

A fourth of the room is designated as the "role playing area." It contains play furniture, including a stove, sink, and refrigerator, dolls, doll bed and child's cot. During the course of observations, the "role playing area" was elaborately equipped with props for two themes; i.e., "the hospital" and "the post office." For the weeks of playing hospital, the props included nurses' caps, white lab coats, a green operating room outfit complete with shoecovers, stethoscopes, cotton swabs, elastic bandages, etc.. A desk with a sign reading "Receptionist" and a black telephone, steno pad, and pencil were set up at the entrance to the area. A line of chairs and a sign "Waiting Room" were set up in another part of the area.

The kitchen, which separates the two large classrooms, has windows on either side looking into the other rooms. It contains appliances and cupboards at one end. A set of kitchen table and chairs is used by the teachers for materials and their personal belongings. A child-size table and seven chairs are at the other end of the room.

The other large classroom is called the "small activity" room. It is divided into the following activity areas: easel and water table; science, including guinea pigs, an aquarium, and plants; manipulatives (puzzles, small blocks); listening station with record player and earphones; and reading, with a couch, floor pillows, and bookcase.

The bulletin board, which runs the length of the room, displays posters related to the "role playing" theme and childrens' artwork. The artwork usually consists of identical shapes (shamrocks, umbrellas, eggs, tulips), which are cut from different colors of construction paper and decorated with crayon or paint by the children.

Organization and Daily Activities

Although the starting times for the Pre-K classes are staggered, the sequence of activities in Marshview I and II are identical. One can easily predict the type of activity taking place in either class by checking the time. In addition to the daily schedule, Marshview II shares another important organizational feature with Marshview I; i.e., "locker teacher" and "locker group." Each teacher assistant has a group of six children for which she is mainly responsible.

During the initial "open play" which precedes breakfast, only the "small activity room" is available to the children. One of the assistants is preparing breakfast at this time, and the other two assistants and teacher aide are in the "small activity room." There is less activity going on than that observed in Marshview I during this time block. The children were more curious about the observer and sought interaction with her, while the observer's presence usually went unnoticed in Marshview I.

> As soon as I sat down, Allison came over to me. Her speech is very difficult to understand, but she spoke without hesitation:
>
> Allison:
>
> "Hi, my name is Allison." She extended both of her hands in my direction.
>
> Observer:
>
> "Hi, Allison. My name is Sandy." I took Allison's right hand in mine, and we shook hands. Allison is a husky girl, with straight dark brown hair and bangs, which she frequently brushes out of her eyes with the back of her hand. She has deep set, blue eyes with black lashes.
>
> Allison:
>
> "Hi, Sandy...(a slight pause, as she leans on the back of the chair next to me.) I know my alphabet...a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i..(the letters trail off) I can make a rabbit." She moved to the easel just behind us in the art area. There is a yellow plastic smock hanging on the easel, and Allison pulled it on over her head. Without hesitation, she picked up a paint brush from the jar of green paint and made an approximation of a rabbit, complete with ears and whiskers. She painted with the one color. At the end of one brush stroke, Allison pulled off the smock and left the

easel - all in one non-stop motion.

The staff in the room uses this time to "catch up" on assessments, both those required by the state and those items listed on the Pre-K skills record. There is a large three-ringed binder for each child, which is divided into sections such as home visits, health records, readiness skills, etc. When working one-to-one with a child, the teacher gets the child's notebook and records the results. One group of children routinely worked puzzles together during this play period. The others either observed what the staff was doing or followed the observer through the room, occasionally getting involved with something along the way.

> (The observer had moved to the doorway of the kitchen, watching one of the assistants, Ms. Phipps, who was preparing breakfast.)
>
> Several children had entered the large, empty classroom, and Ms. Phipps directed them back into the other classroom: "The activity room is closed, find something to do in the other room, please." To me, Ms. Phipps explained: "They'd be in there the whole time if they could - you know they can run around, do a lot, and the sand table is in there, too." Standing in the doorway of the activity room, Ms. Phipps pointed out the area all equipped for playing hospital which I had noticed before: "See, it's all set up for role playing. We're doing doctor and nurse this week. Each week or two we do a different theme. The kids just love it." Ms. Phipps worked quickly and efficiently in the kitchen area, putting food and containers away, while she talked to me.
>
> Ms. Phipps:
>
> "You'll see, as soon as breakfast is all cleared away and I open that room, they're all going to be running into there."

During the breakfast meal which follows open play, routines similar to those in Marshview I are observed. The children sit in their locker groups. Their names are printed on oaktag strips, and the children must find their names and then sit in that space.

When the large activity room is opened after breakfast, typically eleven to twelve children immediately move into that room. Ms. Phipps usually oversees the activity in this room, while the rest of the staff works in the kitchen or other classroom.

> Five or six children were over in the "roleplaying area" already putting on the stethoscope, hats, large white aprons, and one girl is attempting to get into the white lab coat. One other girl has on the green operating room coverings for hair and shoes, as well as the wrap around smock. A child comes up to her and says, "It's my turn to wear it." The child refuses to give the costume up and the other child runs into the kitchen area calling, "Ms. Phipps..." Shortly, Ms. Phipps comes in with the girl and approaches the group in the hospital setup, "Janie waited all day yesterday for a turn to wear the doctor's suit, so it's her turn next." In a few minutes I'm going to ask you to let her have it." Ms. Phipps patted the girl's back, and reassured her that she would get a turn for sure.
>
> At this point a squabble between the children breaks out in the block area. All of the children in the dressup clothes have come over to the area getting on top of the platform and doing various kinds of dances. Children that had been building over there in the first place were getting angry because they had plans to make this into a boat and the children were now coming over and saying no, it was a house and they were having a party. The children were getting angry and arguing with each other. Both Allison and Bobby are now in the area. At this point, Ms. Phipps goes over to the light switch against the wall and turns the lights on and says, "Boys and Girls, look over at me, boys and girls look over here. I think we have a problem. People in the block area are arguing with one another. Now instead of arguing what could you do? I think you should think about what you could do instead of arguing. Now the children were building a boat and they really don't want you other children coming over and getting inside of their boat. Maybe you could build two things. There are lots of blocks." Then Ms. Phipps turns the lights back off, comes over near where I'm sitting to talk to one of the mothers that's visiting. The children seem to have worked out some kind of compromise, where now what they're making is a houseboat.

The children move in and out of the roles they adopt in dressup clothes, carry on conversations and maintain their play with little adult supervision. Both of the children who are mainstreamed into the Marshview II class, Bobby and Allison, participate fully in the dramatic play.

> Rusty was sitting at the "receptionist" desk, with pencil and paper pad, and a telephone. Several children had picked up dolls and were seated in a row of chairs, waiting to see the doctors and nurses. The children in costume would walk over and get one of the "parents" and bring them into the doctor's office. The girl in the green operating clothes took the doll from one of the children, and said: "Your baby is sick. She needs a shot." The "doctor" used a cotton swab to give the shot and laid the doll down in the crib. "She'll be all right now." Allison walked into this area holding her elbow and saying "doctor, doctor." A couple of the children in costume rushed over to her and helped her lay down in the bed. The nurse gave her a shot in the arm, and the doctor got a sling off the cabinet and attempted to get it over Allison's head and place her arm in it. They experienced a great deal of difficulty with this and asked Ms. Phipps for help in tying it on.
>
> Bobby went up to Rusty and picked up the telephone. Rusty said "No!" and pulled it from his hands. Bobby calmly sat down at the desk along side Rusty, who then got up and became one of the parents waiting to see the doctor or nurse with his child. Bobby picked up the telephone and held it to his ear. Another patient quickly walked up to the desk and asked to see a doctor. Bobby pointed to the chairs, saying "Ok, sit down..."

Locker groups meet for small group instruction with their locker teachers, just as in Marshview I. In this class, however, the children have been grouped by ability.

> Observer:
>
> "So, how did you divide up the children - you mentioned you had the lowest group."
>
> Ms. Hawley:
>
> "Mhmm. We do a screening at the beginning of the year. It's required by the state and then we divide the kids up by what they need the most. So my group - which is my locker group too - is really low in language. Ms. Sorenson has the highest group, not just in language but those kids were doing a lot of skills when they came. Bobby needs language, too, but he's in Ms. Phipps' group. It would be too much to have Bobby and Allison in the same group."

Observer:

"Why is that?"

Ms. Hawley:

"Well, you know they both go to the CP Center in the afternoons. Allison goes every day and Bobby just twice a week. So, it's a lot to get over there, observe, get the IEP from them, and keep up with all the paperwork here. So we spread it out some."

During the structured small group lesson, each locker group meets in a separate room and works on a different task. Mary Lou Anceti, the aide assigned to Allison, usually leaves whatever project she's working on, and sits close by to Ms. Hawley's group. During the series of observations, Mary Lou redirected Allison to the task, (answering questions about a story), only once.

Throughout the morning session, the teaching team and children in Marshview II move through the predictable, well-established routines. Although the tone is more structured and controlled in the Marshview II class, the routines and activities are very similar in all the classes. As the children prepare to leave for their buses, the emphasis on independence, which is so readily observable during meals, is apparent in the manner in which the teachers respond to requests for help from their locker groups. The tasks involved in getting outerwear on, such as zipping up a jacket were started, when necessary, but never completed, by a teacher. Following dismissal, the teaching team has an hour break between sessions. Fifteen to twenty minutes of this break is usually devoted to setting up the rooms for the afternoon session. The same activities are typically repeated for the p.m. session.

EXPERIENCES OF THE FIVE CHILDREN IDENTIFIED AS BEING MAINSTREAMED

Perceptions and Influences of the Director and Teaching Staff

Allison, Bobby, Beth, Craig and Aimee all have individual educational plans (I.E.P.'s). Their I.E.P.'s, however, are not written by the Pre-K staff and pertain to services provided at the Cerebral Palsy Center, or, as in Aimee's case, to speech therapy which takes place outside the classroom.

In general, the Marshview Pre-K teachers do not perceive themselves as routinely singling out the five mainstreamed children for special attention or programming. During the course of daily classroom activities, they have similar expectations for all the children in the areas of behavior, task completion, and participation. Assistance is given to the children on an "as-needed" basis.

The direction on the phonograph record was to "Put your head through the ring," and Bobby held the ring in his hands. He saw the other children raise their rings, and he did the same, but was unable to complete the action. He maintained raising his ring, while the next direction was to jump over the ring. He did not follow the direction, but continued to look around at the other children. He attempted to copy their jumping back and forth over their rings, but he did so while holding onto his ring and raising his body up and down, a slight jumping-in-place. Ms. Phipps moved over to Bobby repeated the direction, and physically assisted Bobby through the action. When attempting to jump over the ring, Bobby fell, attempted it again, and landed on the ring rather than over it. Ms. Phipps responded, "Good jumping, Bobby."

Differences in the abilities of the five mainstreamed children to participate and behave appropriately are not anticipated by the staff; e.g., during large group activities, such as story or music times, the teachers do not routinely seat themselves next to Bobby, Allison, Aimee, Beth and Craig. Verbal cues are called out to the children when necessary and all the children are encouraged to help each other or "follow along" with the actions of their peers. The range of activities and both the quantity and quality of teacher support, are generally the same for all the children.

> (The first few minutes of open play in Marshview II)
>
> At that point, one of the children came over to Ms. Phipps and asked her to help zip up the dress she was putting on. Allison, in the dressup area, found a basketball or baseball shirt that she had put on. Apparently she had worn this before because Ms. Phipps said to her, "Hey, Allison, you really like that shirt don't you. You look so nice in it. Here, look in the mirror. See Allison, there you are. Don't you look nice."

Allison doesn't respond verbally at this point but seems to be grinning into the mirror. When Ms. Phipps moves on to help another child with an article of clothing, Allison struck a pose in the mirror with one hand on her hip and the other arm flexed as if she were showing her muscle. It was a comical pose and she grinned at herself in the mirror.

(Later during that play period, an argument broke out between the children in the dressup area and the children playing with blocks.)

The children seem to have worked out some kind of compromise where now what they're making is a houseboat, but not the entire crew agrees with this and Allison starts arguing with this and starts calling loudly to another child "Come over here, come over here" and nobody is answering her and Allison is getting more and more upset. At this point, Ms. Phipps suggests to another child that Allison is upset because she has no one to build with and would this child please go over and help.

(Just before lunchtime in Marshview I, Aimee had come back into the classroom from a session with the speech therapist.)

Aimee sat down with her locker group, but made no motion toward preparing anything for herself. To her teacher's questions of "Would you like some soup?"; "What kind of sandwich would you like today?", Aimee either didn't respond at all or she shook her head "No." Ms. Panski moved her attention to other children at the table, and Aimee watched them, still sucking her index finger. After several minutes, Ms. Panski again focused on Aimee, holding out the basket of bread and asking, "Would you like to make a sandwich?" Aimee nodded "Yes" and took a slice of bread. "What do you want on your sandwich?" Aimee responded "meat," but very softly.

According to the Pre-K director and teaching staff, the five mainstreamed children do not demand any special teacher strategies:

Observer:

"It's interesting to hear you explain it. Because when I talk to the teachers, like Diane and Lorin and I ask them "Do you do anything special for Craig, for Aimee," they usually say "Oh no, nothing special."

Rita:

"Well, we don't separate them out and say, 'Ok, Beth, it's your time to be alone and work on your handicap.' You know that we don't, but we plan things. Last year we sat down and figured out some really realistic goals for Beth. Mrs. Bart, the itinerant teacher wasn't doing it. She was really too itinerant. So Diane and I sat down and figured out what we thought would be right for Beth. She really needed special goals. We couldn't have her distinguish colors, because we didn't know the extent of her handicap."

(Ms. Sorenson, an assistant in Marshview II was being interviewed.)

Observer:

"Do you do anything special, just for Bobby and Allison?"

Ms. Sorenson:

"I don't think so. They may need a little more help, but we treat them the same. Well, we have what you might call "hidden structure," and I think that helps too."

Observer:

"What's that?"

Ms. Sorenson:

"Well, we know when we're working on some skill with the kids, but they don't. So when we plan the week, we may decide that one of us will work on the skill a few extra times with one of the kids - you know, just take him in the other room for a few minutes away from free play. So we know who needs what, and we just fit it in. We keep track in one of these (hands over a big red three-ringed notebook). See, here's where we write down about home visits, and here are skill check lists, testing. We do that for all the kids and it's really not different for Bobby and Allison except that they go to the CP Center."

Rather than employing special strategies to support the children with disabilities, some general practices, such as positive reinforcement, are viewed as beneficial to all the children.

Observer:

"I mentioned things to the teachers, like 'How did you plan for Bobby to participate in as many activities as he does?' They looked at me and said, 'Well, we just help him.'" (Rita's laughter)

Rita:

"Well, one of the things that goes along with that, and it's another part of the philosophy, and that is positive reinforcement. The classroom is totally positive. There's nothing negative. So encouraging Bobby, you know, is if he hops on the right foot - if he does something a little right, and you know, it's all positive reinforcement. It's pats on the back, kisses and encouragement for things that he's doing really well. We really do not focus on negatives at all. At least when I've been in the classrooms. That's really the policy and the way that we approach kids and their families. As best we can, and yet we don't give pats for you know, for poor behavior or for when somebody doesn't get it right. It's really a very positive climate that we like to foster. And that helps every child, not only disabled children."

During the course of observations and interviews, it became apparent that the teachers were aware of the different kinds of needs demonstrated by the mainstreamed children. Yet, the teachers repeatedly shared their opinion that "nothing special" was required in terms of teaching strategies and programming. This discrepancy between what is known and what is done was observed on numerous occasions when a child's identified need was not responded to by a teacher support or planned intervention.

> Observer:
>
> "What do you think Bobby's needs are?"
>
> Ms. Phipps:
>
> "Oh, Sandy, I'm not sure. He really needs so much. There's his language and speech. He's only using two and three word phrases, and sometimes they're hard to understand. He's better now at moving around, but you must have noticed how awkward he is when he tries to do anything physical - like running, or climbing. He still falls over nothing quite a bit."
>
> (Language, speech and gross motor development were identified as needs. Yet, Bobby receives no "special" support in response to them.)
>
> Several of the boys went right over to the block area and started lining up the large hollow blocks. Bobby is at the sand table, holding on to its sides and pulling himself forwards and back in a rocking motion. He watches the boys playing with the blocks and says to them, "Sand Open," but the boys either do not hear him or choose not to respond. Bobby repeats his statement to them, and when they still do not answer, he looks at me and says "sand," patting it with his hand. I responded, "Yes, Bobby, it looks like nice sand to play in." He repeats, "sand open." There is a wooden cover for the sand laying on the floor, and I guess he means that now the cover is off the sand table.
>
> During this transition time, Bobby is wandering around the room without becoming involved with any materials or children. He saw one of the children walking around with a furry green puppet, and he walked alongside of that girl smiling when she made it "talk" to people in the room. Bobby bounces a bit as he walks, shifting the top of his body from side to side with each step. Occasionally, he parrots a word the girl says who is carrying the puppet.

In Marshview I, both the lead teacher, Ms. Kennedy, and Aimee's locker teacher, Ms. Panski, had commented that Aimee was speaking much less since she had been fitted with a hearing aid; in fact, "hardly saying a word."

Observer:

"Do you do anything different for Aimee because she has so little hearing?"

Ms. Kennedy:

"No, I don't think so. We have to speak directly to her to make sure she hears directions, but I can't think of anything special. We'd like to get her talking more, but we're not going to do anything new with her. She's out there now with the speech teacher."

After speech therapy, Aimee appeared, on several occasions, to have difficulty re-entering the classroom and its ongoing activity. She often stood apart, looking at the floor and sucking a finger, and did not initiate interaction with a child or adult. Aimee's non-talking went unchallenged, with no teacher intrusion attempting to elicit a verbal response, even when a natural reward or consequence for talking was present.

> Aimee and Kate were sitting together, again, at lunch. They were both enthusiastically eating orange sections - sucking the juice with the entire section against their mouths - flattened like large, orange-colored clown smiles. Aimee looked more animated and at ease today. Her chair was pulled right up to the table, making eye contact with Kate, giggling. Both girls reached for more oranges, but the plate was empty. Mrs. P. had a whole, unpeeled orange on the tray. Kate asked her to cut it up, but Mrs. P. suggested that she check Ms. Kennedy's table and ask if there were some more orange slices there. Aimee responded, "Me, too." She and Kate walked over toward the other table, but Aimee stopped half way and resumed the posture I had observed last time, slouched down, finger in mouth, rubbing one foot on the rug in front of her.
>
> Kate requested another section and received it. She skipped back over to Mrs. P.'s table. Aimee watched Kate get the orange slice, glanced at Ms. K. who was looking in another direction. Aimee returned to her chair and sat down next to Kate watching her eat and enjoy the orange. Aimee was licking her lips occasionally, watching every bite that Kate made, but she herself made no attempt to get what she wanted.
>
> Mrs. P. remarked to Kate, "Did Ms. Kennedy have more orange, Kate?" Kate nodded and Mrs. P. continued gathering things up to carry back into the kitchen area.

Variations of the above incicent were observed on several occasions. Aimee's experiences might have been interpreted as lessons in natural consequences. However, these "lessons" were not usually observed by the teachers nor was follow-up planned to assist Aimee in verbalizing her needs or intentions.

> As the groups assembled to return to their lockers and prepare to go home, I checked with Mrs. P. regarding the orange-slice incident and Aimee. Apparently, she hand't noticed Aimee stopping midway and returning empty handed, and it was not a planned intervention. I asked Mrs. P. if there were any special strategies being implemented to increase Aimee's speech.
>
> Mrs. P.:
>
> "Not really, except for seeing Lenore, the speech teacher, twice a week. If she really wants something, I think Aimee would ask for it. I think she needs some more time to get use to all the changes since the hearing aids."

The fact that the teaching staff does not perceive special attention or efforts as necessary for the mainstreamed children may be related to a more general perception of the Pre-K program as already providing something "special" to children who are "different." The mandates of the state education department, such as ongoing assessment and health services, probably contribute to this perception. The criteria for admission to Pre-K set the majority of the children, and their families, apart as "different."

> Director:
>
> "They're (the teachers) very eager to take children who are different. When you're obviously working with the 90% low income - there are - you don't have to be disabled "physically" - there are a lot of other disabilities and the teachers have never objected to taking extra children. When we've reached our quota and someone comes in with really a problemed family, I will call any of the classrooms and say "will you take an extra child" and there's no question. There's no question about it."

The teachers, according to Rita Marcus, get so involved with the parents and children that they "can't separate their roles as just teachers and not social workers and psychiatrists." The director perceives the teachers as "going overboard" to respond to all the children and their families.

While the criteria for admission to the Pre-K do not pertain to the mainstreamed children, these criteria seem to have influenced the teacher perceptions of the children identified as "handicapped". During interviews with the teachers, the families and homes of the mainstreamed children were labeled as "good" or "bad", and the families were somewhat held accountable for the children's current needs and progress.

> "Oh, his mother is dizzy. We set up a time for a visit and then she doesn't show up. He was almost dropped from therapy at the CP Center because his parents didn't bring him. I think they both work and couldn't keep things straight. They seem to love Bobby, but I think they're still scared he's going to be retarded or something."

> "There are no limits or routines in that house, so she started school like a wild animal. You know, and that's a shame because Allison can do a lot and if they work on her speech, she could really probably get on in school with no problem. Oh, and that's another thing. Allison's mother doesn't think Allison has a speech problem, says that she can understand everything Allison says. If her home were different, I don't think Allison would have any problems other than her speech, and maybe even that would be better."

In general, the Marshview Pre-K director and staff view the five children who are mainstreamed as being more like, than different from, their classmates. While this view facilitates the children's admission to and participation in the Pre-K program, it does not facilitate intensive educational programming for individual needs.

The Children's Progress and Future School Placements

In the Marshview Pre-K program, most children attend for one or two years, and, at age five, begin the half-day kindergarten in their neighborhood schools. For Craig and Aimee, this will hold true. Craig's condition has stabilized, and, other than being smaller physically, he will not stand out from his peers. After another year of Pre-K, Aimee is expected to attend kindergarten and continue to receive speech therapy.

Beth has attended Pre-K for two years, and she also has received supportive services by an itinerant teacher of the blind.

Rita Marcus:

"The point is that Beth is eligible for kindergarten, age-wise, but she's not ready for a kindergarten experience. Her parents, I think, are moving to Chittenango, and there are no programs for handicapped children her age. So we had a committee on the handicapped meeting, and I said that I would make the exception. For a child with a handicapping condition, I would make the exception and take her into Pre-K. But I would not do it for any other child of kindergarten age."

"Not ready," in Beth's case, meant that, without supportive services, she would not be able to participate in a large group and perform the more structured academic tasks expected in kindergarten.

One of the children, Bobby, will not be returning to Pre-K or attending kindergarten. In spite of progress observed by his teachers in the identified areas of language and motor development, Bobby's educational needs are seen as too demanding for a mainstreamed kindergarten placement.

Observer:

"What about next year?"

Ms. Phipps:

"He'll be in Sharon Jost's class at the CP center, full-time.

Observer:

"That's a program only for children with special needs, isn't it?"

Ms. Phipps:

"Yeah, I think I know what you mean. The other kids here are great for Bobby. He really tries to do as they do. But I think it will be more intensive for his speech and language. It's probably worth his investing a year to get that. Then, we'll have to see where he is. Maybe he'll continue to catch up and could start a regular kindergarten when he's six."

The director is less optimistic about Bobby's future school placement:

Director:

"I think he's made gains. Language was his disabling area. At the CP Center in his program, they focus on language because he has so many other handicaps. He just wasn't walking well at all. Now he gets around pretty well. He drags a leg, you know, one leg isn't right. Manipulation - you know, I think he's done a lot more small motor. So he's improved, but not really the way we thought. I guess we thought he'd be talking in full sentences, but maybe that wasn't realistic. Maybe we don't know enough about language development."

"...you know, unless they can figure out better what exactly is going on for Bobby, he may very well get labeled mentally retarded and be in a special class farther down the line. Unless his speech improves, I'm not sure if Marshview will have him in a kindergarten class."

The program Bobby will attend next year has been extended to a full day. There will be six or seven other children in the class, and they all are labeled "severely speech and language delayed."

Rita Marcus:

"We know that Bobby didn't make as much progress as we would have liked, and we think that perhaps he needs more testing, maybe he has other problems that haven't been uncovered yet, and that's why his placement next year is going to be full day at the CP Center. In a way I'm sad that he won't be with typical children, he's such a social person. He just adores all the other kids, and next year he'll be with just five other kids, and a different environment. Sharon Jost has to run a different environment. It's not open, the room is subdued. I feel badly, but I understand that people from the clinic want to just try it for a year, it's a year out of his life, and see if academically he can make more gains."

For both Bobby and Beth, the overriding factor in determining a school program appears to be their abilities to handle the academic requirements of kindergarten.

In Allison's case, the staff perceives kindergarten as the appropriate placement, but with a few reservations regarding Allison's speech and behavior.

Observer:

"What will happen when Allison leaves Pre-K this year?"

Ms. Hawley:

"Not sure yet. I kinda wonder about that. We don't know if the district will pay for the aide to go with her. She probably will go into a regular half-day kindergarten, but I don't know what it will be like. They won't be able to understand her at first. I doubt if her speech will change that much by September. And when she has to do something she doesn't want to do, who knows? She may really let loose. That's why I think that Mary Lou should go with her, at least until she gets use to it."

Observer:

"What about after kindergarten?"

Ms. Hawley:

"Well, like I said before, it all kinda depends on her speech. She's a bright little girl, but if people can't understand her... then I don't know."

Observer:

"How do you think the other children see Allison, how do they get along with her?"

Mary Lou:

"At first I think they thought she was different. She was always running and they saw her trying to hit me and they were kind of wary of her, but not now. I just wish they could do something more with her speech. When she leaves here for school I really don't know. They really don't know the dialect. They're going to have a real hard time trying to understand what she's saying. They don't know what kind of damage she had. Whether it was perinatal, post natal, prenatal, but unless you know her dialect, like I've gotten to from being with her so much, you really can't understand what she's telling you."

The director and teachers at Marshview Pre-K attribute much of the children's progress to the opportunity they had to learn from the modeling of their peers.

Observer:

"Ms. Phipps, you mentioned that Bobby is changing. How is his progress measured?"

Ms. Phipps:

"Well, with him we do it mostly by observing. He can't do most of the tests that the state says we have to do. He's down off their charts. He can do some of the tasks we test the other kids on, like ordering and sorting, but not too much else. He follows along and joins in now whereas before he was more like a doll - you had to move him through things or he'd just sit on the floor."

Ms. Sorenson:

"That's why I think it's good for the kids to be with each other. Allison and Bobby have learned a lot by watching the other kids."

"Bobby participated sporadically with the triangle he was given to play - no teacher prompting. He had difficulty holding the triangle properly and striking it, for he would drop it and miss his turn. Bobby observed the other children nearby and attempted to imitate how they held and struck their triangles. As the record continued, he managed to play the instrument several times, correctly. When a couple of nearby children engaged in some inappropriate behaviors, (using the instruments for fun and teasing instead of music), Bobby imitated these behaviors as well, seemingly not knowing that he was imitating anything more or less correct than striking the triangle."

The five children participated fully in all activities in Marshview I and II with little or no teacher support. The teachers emphasized that the level of participation, independence, and interaction with peers had been increasing since the children's first days of Pre-K. Perhaps the most dramatic change in performance was seen in Allison, who entered Pre-K with an aide.

Observer:

"Rita told me that you're Allison's aide."

Mary Lou:

"Right, I was with her all the time. You wouldn't believe how she's changed."

Observer:

"What kind of changes Mary Lou?"

Mary Lou:

"Well, the hyperactivity level has - not diminished but improved. She'll do what the other kids are doing. Before she played only by herself, but now she'll play alongside and sometimes even join other kids. She has more of an attention span now and she'll sit and try things. She was running from one thing to another before. She wouldn't even sit at a snack table with the other kids. She was so aggressive that I had to be ducking around with her.

> (O.C. Mary Lou acted out what she meant by ducking, kind of dodging left and right with her head and shoulders as if she were trying to avoid being hit.) And outside, she was unbelievable, she'd be tearing around all over, you couldn't take your eyes off of her."

Mary Lou now functions in the classroom as a general aide and substitute. The changes in Allison's behavior were attributed to "getting her out of her home" and to the "consistency of routines" in the classroom. The Marshview II teachers all stressed that, with Allison, they "taught what was expected at certain times and stuck with it." On one occasion Allison was observed, not only participating, but enhancing the entire group experience:

> Ms. Phipps changed the record to an instrumental one and let the children just play along. During one particular Dixieland type, jazzy song, Allison started moving back and forth and keeping time. Finally, it seemed like the beat just took her over, and she stood up to dance. Ms. Hawley, sitting near me, laughed and commented to me - "Allison can mooove!" She then commented to Allison, who was standing with her feet wide apart, arms and head moving vigorously to the beat, "I don't blame you, Allison - let's all do it." Ms. Hawley stood up and many of the children jumped up to dance. She commented, "Look at Allison. Boy, you're right up with the disco, Allison!" The record continued, and all the children were joining in - giggling, looking at themselves in the mirror - obviously enjoying the chance to move around freely. Ms. Phipps commented, "Look at Allison. She really has the moves (laughter)." Allison was really getting warmed up. "Come on, can you dance like Allison?" The focus was clearly on Allison's dancing ability, and she glowed with delight.

The teachers are required to chart the progress of all the children in the areas of academic, social, emotional and physical growth. All of this data is forwarded to the state education department. The data, which documents progress and change, is much less significant for the five mainstreamed children, for they are not included in the state's target population of 90% high risk families." The five mainstreamed children will be evaluated by the district's Committee on the Handicapped, as they reach school age, and placement will then be recommended.

Programmatic Elements Related to Mainstreaming

Teacher Preparation and Training

As previously discussed, the teachers in the Marshview Pre-K classes state that "nothing special" is done in the way of programming for the five children identified as being mainstreamed. One exception to this perception is the teachers' preparation for a child's entry into their classes. This preparation includes observation of the child, reading available information on the identified handicap, consultation with specialists already providing related services, and attending workshops or conferences.

Director:

> "So the teachers on their own learn a lot. With Bobby, all the teachers went over to the CP Center to watch him there. So our teachers really go overboard. An administrator could not ask for anything more."

Observer:

> "With the children here that have been identified as having special needs - that's Bobby, Allison, Craig, Aimee and Beth - do the teachers need any special information or reports or help from the outside to get those children started?"

Director:

> "The teachers absolutely feel the need. I don't even have to tell them. We've had for Beth, who is blind, an itinerant teacher for the blind. The teachers attended a workshop which she gave as a matter of fact. I just had teachers go down to Syracuse University a couple of weeks ago, there was a workshop on handicapped youngsters. Every time there is a workshop. I had put money into the budget last year for teachers to attend. I'm really big on workshops, if there is something pertinent. And so, anytime material comes out on handicaps, I will duplicate that. Mrs. Bart, the itinerant teacher of the blind, has given a lot of her suggestions, we've given suggestions to her. The teachers are interested in learning. They will read up themselves on what the problem is.

Preparation also takes the form of providing current materials for classroom use.

Observer:

"I know that in Marshview I, in talking to Diane, she told me that one of the students from the high school who wears a hearing aid came down to talk to the class before Aimee got her aid. I also noticed some materials in the classroom which explained disabilities to children in picture form - large and colorful."

Director:

"Right, we've done that this year. We've gotten things for all the classrooms. Some beautiful things have come out. It's something that we really need to talk about to kids, so that nothing is really secret. Last year we had a child with one arm, and we talked about that. I think it's really open, and the teachers are really sensitive, too."

According to the Pre-K director, the teachers' preparation for mainstreaming stems from their experience in early childhood education and their commitment to learning - "giving each child what he needs, whatever it is." In addition to crediting the teachers with the success of the Pre-K program, Rita Marcus identifies the teacher as the key element in making mainstreaming work.

Rita:

"Well, you must have some ideas about mainstreaming and what it takes to make it work. What do you think the key element is?"

Observer:

"Well, I could probably identify some of the things that help us at the school where I work. What do you think the key element is?"

Rita:

"It's the teacher, of course. There's not a doubt in my mind that if you get the right teacher, you can do anything. The teacher makes all the difference in the world. You can have the most modern school, well you saw what this building is like - only the latest, but when the classroom door is closed, the only thing that determines what happens for kids is the teacher."

Observer:

"Is it your teachers that make mainstreaming work in this program?"

Rita:

"Of course, our teachers will do anything for a child."

"Doing anything" is not equated to doing anything for any child. Prior to accepting a child with a disability, a number of factors are taken into account, including the type of disability, the supports necessary to respond to a child's needs, and the type of educational experience offered by the Pre-K classes.

Observer:

> "Just one final question, Rita. I know you have to go. If you were contacted by another Pre-K director who had heard you were mainstreaming children with special needs into your program, what kind of guidelines or advice would you give? How do you make it work?"

Rita:

> "Well, first of all, the administrator shouldn't make the decision alone, about accepting the kids. You have to talk to your staff. I would never impose a child on anyone, unless that child would be received with open arms. So the first thing I would say you have to say to your staff or team of teachers is, "Look, we have this child." And then you really have to observe that child before you make a final acceptance, observing the family or school if he's coming from somewhere else. Observe just what exactly his handicap is so you can relay that information to your team and talk about it. So they know exactly what kind of child they would be getting. We would never accept a child that we felt we could not help in some way."

Observer:

> "Have there been any children with disabilities that you felt you could not maintain in this program?"

Rita:

> "The only one, that I think I mentioned to you before, was last year when we did take an autistic child for a couple of months. And we took her. The district wouldn't fund an aide. The parents paid an aide to come in with her. We had a very good person, an aide who had been a sub for us, a very good person, who herself is handicapped. Had cerebral palsy and other problems, and so it was very interesting...we had a handicapped aide working with Heather, who was an autistic child. We tried our best, and it was in Diane's class. We really worked with the parents, and it didn't work out because we felt there was too much stimulation. And we didn't make that decision...The parent made that decision. They said she was off the wall at home. She probably needed a smaller classroom. It was the parents that decided that it was too much stimulation. We couldn't change our whole classroom and have no centers, but as a matter of fact, open classroom - I have found - works with every child, except for the child who's hyperactive.

> In an open classroom, there is a lot of things going on, things all over the walls, kids moving and talking, jumping, and a truly hyperactive kid couldn't make it in that place. And we felt that Heather really couldn't make it. It was too much. She really couldn't focus. She really needs it quieter, not twenty four kids. But everybody else has really worked out well."

The "open classroom" environment in the Marshview Pre-K classes is mandated by the state education department. In addition, Rita Marcus identifies it as the type of environment most conducive to learning for preschool and elementary-aged children. Therefore, a child's ability to function within the parameters of the Pre-K's open classroom becomes an influential determinant of acceptance.

Director:

> "I couldn't accept a child that was physically handicapped in a wheelchair. I don't know whether that would work well. I don't know. I'd have to figure that out. I wouldn't accept an autistic child or a child like Allison unless I had an aide for that child. I think a child should enter a program with a lot of plusses in his favor, Ok?"

Observer:

> "What role would the aide play?"

Rita:

> "Well, in Allison's case, her problem was not having control of her own body. We needed to have somebody who could remove her when she needs to be removed from the environment. We had to have an extra hand, someone who could give her the attention. With so many young children, threes and fours, we have to have someone for that child to call her own, to give her much more attention. Even with a ratio of 6:1, there may be a time when a child needs someone really special for a minute. And I wanted to give the child the best chance possible, like with Allison and with Heather, with having an aide there in case that child needed it, not hovering over her, but in case that child needed it. So, I think you have to know your own limits, you know, of what your program can do. I know, especially now after two years, what we can do for kids, so you just work within that. In accepting any child with a handicap, you have to do a lot of thinking about the whole situation beforehand. If you're not positive that the child can make it, then you shouldn't accept the child."

Once a child with special needs is accepted into the Pre-K program, "making it" seems to depend more on the child's management of the open classroom than on the teacher's preparation or training in a specific disability area.

The Pre-K Early Childhood Model

There are numerous features of the Marshview Pre-K which appear positively related to mainstreaming. Some of these features are required by the state education department, while others are required by Rita Marcus.

The ratio of children to staff, 6:1, maximizes the potential for individualization and in-depth knowledge of the children and their families. This child/staff ratio is reinforced by the "locker teacher" and "locker group" organization for planning, instruction, and home visitations. The fact that 90% of the program's population is drawn from families labeled "high risk" demands that the staff respond to a wide range of developmental abilities and needs.

One feature of the Marshview Pre-K classes which emerged throughout the series of observations was that of consistency. This consistency pervaded the routines, interactions, and activities in both Marshview I and II. Checking the time of day allowed a reliable prediction of what type of activity would be observed upon entering the classrooms. Though the styles of instruction and interaction differed between the Marshview I and Marshview II teaching teams, the members of each team related to the children and to each other, in a consistent, similar manner.

Observer:

"Maybe, can you tell me what you think mainstreaming requires to be successful?"

Ms. Phipps:

"Well, I know that there it's probably the team teaching. Right? We each have our groups, but then we plan together and share what needs to be done. Like Bobby is in my locker group, but Lila works with him, too. And consistency, too. That's been real important for Allison and Bobby. The kids learn the routines, and they stay the same. That way you can see them learning to handle more and more."

Director:

"I think kids need to have a routine. I hate to use the word open classroom, but I guess what I like better is structured freedom, and that's what I've called my own classes and what I really call this. I think every young child needs to have a routine and a structure, know what's going to happen next. It does a great deal for self concept. It's building the child. And the child feels secure in knowing that at nine o'clock he's going to eat, etc.. There has to be a lot of things happening within that structure, these are just stop points, sign posts. And for a child who is handicapped, it helps because he has to deal with his own frustrations, and he needs to know that certain things are not going to change. I really feel that kids aren't going to use the materials, the experiences that we set up, unless they feel comfortable in the room. And that's our first step for kids with the handicaps is to get them feeling comfortable in the rooms, with the things in the room, and with each other, with the routines. That's just part of good early childhood education."

Discussion

The New York State Education Department has mandated a model for early childhood education which is effectively implemented in the Pre-K classes at Marshview Central School. The mandates for a high staff/child ratio, active, child-initiated learning, and parent involvement are consistent with Rita Marcus's teaching style and values as an educator. Since 90% of the Pre-K program's population must come from families identified as "at-risk" according to the state's criteria, a wide range of developmental abilities can be observed. Some of the children receive speech therapy as part of their pre-school program.

Although the program director has identified mainstreaming as a "special interest" of hers and of the staff, the emphasis of the Pre-K program is clearly directed at early childhood education, rather than the provision of special services. The five children mainstreamed into three of the classes receive all special programming or therapy outside of their classes, and, in all but one instance, from an entirely separate agency. No intensive efforts at remediation or support were observed; indeed, the teaching staff repeatedly emphasized that nothing different, no exceptional efforts, was required to respond to the children with disabilities. While the lack of special programming contributed to everyone being treated in a similar fashion, it also contradicts well-established principles in regard to developmental disabilities; i.e., the earlier and more intensive the intervention, the greater is the growth or change.

The disabilities of the mainstreamed children fall within a range from mild to moderate impairment. In one instance, the identified disability is cystic fibrosis; yet, Craig requires no supportive services and will be entering a regular kindergarten class without being labeled by the standard process. For a child to be mainstreamed into the Marshview Pre-K, it is necessary that the child be judged capable of functioning in an open classroom with no special support other than a teacher's aide, when necessary.

Rita Marcus has a powerful influence both on the characteristics and content of the Marshview Pre-K program. She is solely responsible for the administration of the program. She teaches in the classrooms to model the methods she espouses and designs lesson plan forms for staff use which highlight the individualized objectives for the children. Rita Marcus professes unconditional positive regard for her staff and the quality of the Pre-K program. She uses the 10% open enrollment to mainstream children with disabilities and works closely with a friend who teaches at a private agency. Together, they select children for each other's programs and autonomously implement their decisions, consulting only the children's families.

The Marshview Pre-K program functions separately from the rest of the school. This separateness complements Rita Marcus's autonomy as an administrator, but may have a detrimental effect on the future school placements of the children with disabilities. There is little, if any, coordination between the Pre-K program and the Pupil Personnel Department in the district. None of the anallary staff, principals, or kindergarten teachers are familiar with the children leaving pre-K. As a result, mainstreaming may very well begin and end with Pre-K for several of the five identified children.

The classes in the Marshview Pre-K program provide a positive initial school experience to all the children. The rich, active environment gives the children access to a wide variety of experiences. However, the humanistic educational model of treating everyone the same may not do justice to the special needs of some young children. Perhaps, in their thoughtful consideration of the normal developmental characteristics common to all children, the staff perceives the program as already doing something special. While the Pre-K program integrates children with special needs, its failure to also integrate special interventions and teaching strategies may detour some children from remaining in the mainstream.

CHAPTER 9

"They Think They Can Fly!"

MacMillian Elementary School
Sixth Grade Class

Michele Sokoloff

The School

When the MacMillian School opened in Central City in 1929, visitors from around the world came to see one of the first public schools designed for children with handicapping conditions. Disabled children, grades kindergarten through twelve, were housed in the brick building located on top of a hill. After World War II, typical children living within walking distance began attending the school also, but not in the same classes. In the 1950's the school population was over 600. Many students had either Cerebral Palsy or Polio. Today, MacMillian has a total population of approximately 262 students in grades kindergarten through sixth.

The neighborhood surrounding the school consists of post-World War II box shaped working class houses that are well preserved. A curving drive leads to the large rectangular school building. During school about fifty cars are parked on either side of the drive near to the main entrance. A smaller entrance leads to a ramp and is used by the physically disabled. The brick two story structure looks faded and worn by weather, time and use. Tall windows cover many of the exterior walls and have cracked, pealing wood surrounding each small window pane.

While the exterior of MacMillian is rather decrepid, the interior is in continual rejuvenation. Wide hallways, fresh white walls, large murals, monthly exhibits of pictures illustrating historical events, and colorful student art are reminders of the effort to sustain the interior life of the school despite the crumbling facade. The two floors are connected by a flight of stairs which many children with disabilities cannot negotiate. Handrails are fastened to the walls on the rust-colored carpeted first floor. Wall water fountains are two feet off the floor.

MacMillian has fewer students than other elementary schools in Central City. Rumors about the closing of the school smolder. Not being able to sustain enrollment is often blamed on the school's reputation or "stigma" as being a school strictly for students who have disabilities.

> It was known as a school for retards. You ask most people and no matter who they are, they'll tell you that's a school for retards.
>
> Once a stigma is set, you never lose it. Somehow people don't hear the good things.

For those in the school, a number of aspects are praised and there is a general feeling of being part of a proud family. A woman who has worked in the school cafeteria for a number of years said:

> Kids are responsible for themselves here. This is more like the old way, the better way. We know all the kids and they know us.

A teacher discussed "small classes and good instruction."

Mr. Murray, the principal, describes another view of this specialness:

> What we've got here is acceptance and the lack of mean situations between Black and White. More kids know each other. There's more feelings of security. I know most of the kids and the teachers know the kids that they had last year and the year before. Especially in the city where so many of our kids are in all kinds of bad situations in the home and in the neighborhood, I think the smaller school is better.

While MacMillian is described as a "neighborhood school" approximately eighty students (30% of the total 262 student population) with disabilities are bussed from as far as an hour away.

> If they are needing a program and they are on the elementary level, then this is the school where all those services are centralized... In the MH class, the older kids, they can stay here til they're twenty one years old.

Those services include physical therapy, occupational therapy, a small pool heated to 90 degrees for therapy, four full-time reading assistants, a math teaching assistant, and some 63 full and part-time aides and volunteers. Some classes have two or more aides and volunteers assigned to them while other classes have none. The majority of the aides assist in the seven special education classes. When added to the seventeen classroom teachers, there are about eighty adults interacting with children each day.

There are ten regular or "neighborhood" K-6 classes, seven special education classes and two pre-first or developmental classes "for kids with emotional problems who could not handle first grade." All special education classes are on the first floor along with a few "neighborhood" regular classes. The number of students in the classes varies considerably: some have twenty six or more and some (the pre-first and special ed) have twelve or less.

Teachers, aides and volunteers' ages range from twenty to over fifty. Most are women. Many of the staff have been at MacMillian for many years.

> A lot of those teachers have been there for twenty plus years of teaching. They're like peas in a pod.

Beginnings of Integration

In 1973, on a limited basis, the integration of children with handicapping conditions into regular, "neighborhood" classes began.

> Most of the neighborhood classes were upstairs so the kids in wheelchairs couldn't get up there. I think that would have some bearing on the integration process.

Gradually more "neighborhood" classes moved down to the first floor. There were, however, very few teachers willing to take disabled students into their classes at first. One teacher said that it had only been in the past year that some teachers had been willing to take younger disabled children. In order for a student to be considered for placement in a neighborhood class, the disabled child's teacher must pursue a placement.

The principal has his philosophy about mainstreaming:

> If a new handicapped kid comes here, he goes into a handicapped class. We try to find out where this kid is academically. We try to find out what his limitations are. The teacher working with him might say, 'This kid is a good reader and he's coming along. He can go out in the neighborhood.' So we'll try him with reading.
>
> When kids get mainstreamed, it's based on those kids who can handle it.

If a student "meets certain criteria" then that student is discussed with regular education teachers who might accept the student. A teacher states:

> I had to be in on the meeting and I had to agree to take her in the first place. If I had said no, then that's it.

The principal noted a problem in meeting the criteria:

> Almost all the kids with a physical problem have been tested out to be retarded too. If a kid can't move a limb, he'll have trouble with most of the tests that are out nowadays. These tests don't really show the abilities of these kids.

One of the reading assistants further explains the placement of a student into a regular class:

> The process of integration is easier here in this school compared to another school that is bigger and where you didn't have the contact between staff members which you have here. This school is kind of a unique situation because even our neighborhood teachers have been around our kids (disabled) and they're very understanding.

elementary school and he offered Mrs. Day a teaching position in a program in which she taught half-time and worked half-time on her masters degree in Urban Education. She was able to discuss in the afternoon what happened in her class during the morning.

> It was the best learning situation because I could bring my daily problems to class and they would discuss them as a case... My second year out I had six student teachers. I didn't know anything and we used to sit and plan the greatest programs for kids. We didn't know what would work but we produced some pretty good kids.

After four years at the Massey School, the principal changed to the MacMillian School and asked Mrs. Day to teach there. Mrs. Day's role in the MacMillian School is more than just teacher. She gathers people together to work on projects to figure out new and different activities, programs, and curriculum for the students and the school. She and the other teachers are not concerned with glorifying themselves as much as they are interested in doing these activities for the students.

Mrs. Day began mainstreaming when she started teaching at MacMillian four years ago. Her first classroom was on the second floor and the integration of two students designated handicapped was influenced by the principal. He said

> 'You'll love this program I've got in my head.' He's the biggest salesman you ever saw. He kisses people in the morning and calls me his 'Little Flower'. He's terrific.
>
> The one boy was on crutches and he came up those stairs every day. The other gal was my gem. She was classified legally blind. I kept both of them for three years.

Then Mrs. Day moved down to the first floor and more students from the special ed classes began to come to her room. At the time of this research she had five students designated as handicapped in her room. Some are only there on a part time basis.

The Class

The class involved in the present study is a regular sixth grade class located on the first floor. It is immediately to the left of the entrance and the only sixth grade class in the school. It is rectangular. The wall opposite the door is mostly tall windows that are completely covered with thick, grey buldging plastic, a barrier to the cold. There are three or four pictures of basketball players on the small space of wall between windows. The far right wall is a blackborad. Bulletin boards, on the wall with the doors, are covered pictures of foods that look like a nutrition lesson, pictures and stories about careers, the names of class members written in an unusual cursive style, and other papers. Just about every space is covered. The wall just to the left of the door contains a coat closet that extends ten feet where students place their belongings. It's sliding wood doors are rarely shut.

Most desks face the wall with the door. For the most part desks are lined up in six rows with 4-5 in a row. Two bookcases overflowing with books, boxes and materials jut out into the room. There is a space inbetween the bookcases where a rug is placed. This is a private area where students can work or read.

The only desks not situated with the others belong to students who have some disabling condition. "I don't have a desk. There's no room and I don't know what I'd do with it if I had one," the teacher said.

Time Schedules

The class of twenty nine sixth grade students remains with the sixth grade teacher except for reading, music, art and gym. One or two students go to a speech teacher or occupational therapy regularly. The schedule of events changes some from day to day depending on special projects, speakers, and trips but there are certain regularities. They include an hour of math and an hour of reading in the morning. The math and reading are team taught by two teachers. Math is the principle subject taught by the sixth grade teacher in her room and reading is taught by a fifth grade teacher in her room. While both teachers have different teaching styles, this sharing of students and subjects is a plus for both. Three afternoons a week the sixth grade teacher has a gifted class composed of students selected from the fourth, fifth and sixth grades. She enjoys this, spending a good deal of time in preparation.

The Teacher

Mrs. Day is a woman in her late thirties and stands about five feet, four inches with short hair just long enough to be curly with a permanent. She is a bit chunky especially around the middle. Occasionally she wears lipstick and rouge. She wears casual but neat pants with a top sticking out one day, and switches to a pink, soft blouse with a white wool skirt another day. Whenever Mrs. Day is not teaching in her room, she is smoking incessantly. When she pours her milky coffee from her long thermos, one can observe her hands shaking ever so slightly.

Originally from the Central City, Mrs. Day spent her K-12 years in a parochial school. In undergraduate school she majored in languages and focused on Spanish. Her husband was in the Armed Services in Washington and commuted on weekends to Central City. He then got a transfer to a neighboring town where they lived for awhile. Mrs. Day obtained a teaching job at the state college at the age of twenty three. "They needed women or anyone and were hiring them. It wasn't the way it is now." She taught there for three years. Mrs. Day got involved in some workshops with some people working for the Central City School District and met the current principal of MacMillian. He was then the principal of another

> I knew that there was going to be trouble when he (the principal) said, 'How would you like to move downstairs?' He said that he was always upstairs looking at what was going on and said that he was too old to climb the steps. He's thinking all the time.

Mainstreaming students with disabilities has not altered Mrs. Day's approach toward teaching. In fact, unless one is aware of the varied ability levels of individuals in her class, one would not be able to identify the five who are designated handicapped (with the exception of the three physically disabled students). In reference to those who are mainstreamed, Mrs. Day has said, "The main thing I think is most important is I don't treat the handicapped kids any differently than any other kid." Mrs. Day avoids using the words "handicapped" or "disabled". At times, as if she does not see handicapping conditions. Even scheduling for students who need additional assistance in math, speech, or occupational therapy, is done so that the students do not have to leave the class very much if at all.

> It is very important that any things that make kids different are not emphasized with the other kids or they'll get teased for it.

Much of the emphasis in this class revolves around the accomplishment of math skills. Success is often measured in terms of any student understanding or "getting" a new concept and moving on to another level.

> The kid passes a level that he's been pouring over. That's success. If a kid says, 'I get that; it's so easy.' That's success. As you've been beating your head against the wall for two weeks with this one concept. When they say, 'I get that. Why didn't ya tell me that's how ya did it.' That's success. Socially it's when everybody can get along together. They really don't pick on anybody and try to help each other. That's success.

Teaching Techniques

At times, Mrs. Day's classroom is like an old time sweatshop, all that goes on there is work. Students are given specific tasks for which they are responsible. In the morning when attendance is being taken, everyone does the four or five "Math All" problems that are placed on the board. These problems are checked by Mrs. Day and the number of correct problems is written in her book. When the classes switch for math and reading and the first math class enters, students look at the wall next to the main door to see pieces of paper that have written on them what their individual task is for that day. The students locate the worksheets and any books they will need to complete their task.

> Most students were diligently working on different pages and different types of concepts. Some were graphing dots in order to form a star. Others were dividing fractions. A few students were adding and subtracting decimals. A couple of boys sat at a table and were reading about the mean, median, and mode from a book.

Once a worksheet is completed, they go over to Mrs. Day to have her check it. If there are any mistakes, she questions to help them understand what they did wrong and how to correct it. The student then goes off to correct the mistake. Some dittoed sheets take longer than others so students are not swarming Mrs. Day every second. But there are times when four or five students are waiting.

Mrs. Day is like an octopus with many arms or tentacles all working at the same time and very conscious of what each is doing.

> She would ask three different questions of three different students and not forget what she asked within six seconds. Then she would deal with each one individually. (e.g., it was like seeing several darts or spears being thrown one right after the other with each one reaching their target.)

Mrs. Day gradually evolved her own system of teaching. She observed after her first year of teaching that many of her students were bored, not doing anything or were behind in their work.

> I gradually began individualizing. I knew I had to find a way to involve all of them. It's harder in many ways but much better for the kids.

As Mrs. Day explains her present approach:

> You can motivate a kid to do anything if you do it right. You can have them just die to take that test if you introduce it right... You have to be the world's greatest salesman. The kids often times have their heads in that crazy TV. They sit there and get the best shows and you have to give the best show you can. If kids can be sold to buy goppy glue or something on a TV show, you've got to sell them that they've got to have this as a life skill, for success... There's the straight approach, or if you do the opposite of what they expect, that's another technique.
>
> No one is tough to motivate. Except in one condition; if they're afraid of it. By the time you get to sixth grade it's so ingrained that you've got a problem. Greig is so afraid of math he's paranoid. So you go back. You're gonna spoon feed him all the way and you're gonna tell him how easy it is and this is terrific and this, that and the other. And hopefully if it doesn't look like anything that he's afraid of, then he'll do it.

Large boxes sit on top of shelves in many locations in the room and are crammed with folders and worksheets. These crowded boxes are buldging with papers of all sizes and colors. Some papers are placed inside the boxes lopsided and some straight. The teacher explains that:

> It took me three years to compile all this stuff. I look through old textbooks and take out those topics that I need for my kids. I scavenge through waste baskets too. It's all good material. I'll often thermofax a page to make it into a ditto and then I can always make more copies if I need it. Or I type up certain parts that are good and run it off. People throw out old books and I find all kinds of good things to use in them.

> I don't like the whole group doing a lot of anything unless it's a discussion or something. They just think it's baby stuff. Those kids are so workbook oriented. I use no workbooks. I make my own self-help dittos. They're doing my stuff that's written on the board.

The manner in which Mrs. Day has structured her instruction lends itself to the district-wide required and prescribed "Levels Curriculum". The "Levels" consist of twenty five or more stages of achievement in both math and reading. Each grade level has their own levels tests throughout the school district. The teachers and administrators had found that every teacher had been covering different material in math and reading and when the students went to the junior high school, there was no continuity in what everyone had learned. So they decided to create levels. When the committee created the levels tests, they knew it would be necessary to revise it every three years or whenever the New York State Regents changed their academic criteria or standards.

Mrs. Day was involved on the five person committee to create the Levels tests. The Levels tests cover the concepts that the teachers need to teach to their students. Mrs. Day explains that "the entire district uses it but every teacher teaches the material in a different way.

Mrs. Day explains how the Levels are in her classroom:

> Everyone is working at a different level and there are worksheets that cover the concepts they need to know so that they can pass the Levels test. The more advanced levels deal with algebra and even geometry. I have a few who can handle that.

The Levels Curriculum and Mrs. Day's system of individualizing combined with her own teaching and motivational techniques contribute to a casual and calm, yet directed, atmosphere in the classroom. All three forces are essential elements at work in this classroom. The ways in which Mrs. Day assists and stimulates in the continued work by her students are varied.

Her expectations for all of her students are high.

> I expect them to do the best of their ability. I don't care what their ability is, but they have to do the best they can do. We had these Health projects. David did five sentences on the large and small intestines. He drew a big chart and I helped him recolor it. And he got a "B" on it. That's all he could do and it was marvelous that he could do it. Now Michael T. I expect a lot and I got a four page report on the reproductive system. He gave a speech to the class and was very well done. But he got a "B" too because he didn't have any illustrations. He wasn't up to his par.

Mrs. Day expresses her high expectations as the students are working on their tasks.

> One girl sitting at the far end repeatedly said, "I can't do this, Mrs. Day." Mrs. Day proverbially responded with, "Yes, you can. Try it."

Many of her comments seem to ignite and pump the students up.

> Raymond says to Mrs. Day that he thought the math problems were beyond what he could do. She says to him, "I bet ya a nickel you can do it." He starts working on them.

They respond by tackling their work, grinning privately and/or desiring more work. The students appear to be enjoying themselves with tasks that involve tangible results. These results enable each student to be productive in the sense that they are producing findings and results as well as progressing through the steps or levels required of them.

> Mrs. Day gave a checked paper to a boy who had been going gang-busters through his sheets that day. She said, "Take this home and show it to your parents." She did not say that often to her students.

The desire to continue on is not for the teacher's benefit but their own.

> As Mrs. Day was taking attendance she asked one boy who had finished his "Math All" problems if he would like some more. He nodded and she made up three problems on a scrap piece of paper. He takes it and buries his head in it.

Mrs. Day directs questions to her students and waits patiently for an answer. If she gets it she will ask another right away to see if the student can comprehend an additional step or progression. She tries not to give any work that her students cannot handle. If they are having trouble, she usually spots it quickly. Her words of encouragement range from "alright!", "ok!", to "go to it, Toots", or "that's it, Sweets".

> You're cookin' today. You're going to be able to get up to level 18 very soon. And then you'll be ready for algebra.

There are a few additional instructional strategies that Mrs. Day uses to coax, challenge and lead her students to arrive at correct answers and understandings. She does not believe in telling her students the answers to problems. Sometimes by providing the answer to one part of a problem a student can then fill in the rest by filling in the missing pieces. As Mrs. Day says:

> If you give them an answer, they'll just sit there and think about a basketball game while you do it for them. You break it down and if it's wrong, let them correct it.

In order to make some of the tasks more meaningful and relevant, a tangible example or object is utilized with some of the students.

> One slight, pretty, well-dressed girl kept coming up to the teacher to show her some answers to her word problems. There must have been something missing because she was verbally quizzed each time she came up and then sent back to figure out something else. Mrs. Day made up questions right on the spot. One time she handed the girl a pencil and said, "I'll give you $100 for this pencil and $5 tax. How much will you get?" The girl was hesitant but her eyes lit up and she smiled at the question. Others sitting and standing nearby snickered and made short comments about the example.

Teaching Strategies and Learning Styles

There are a number of students in the class who seem to labor, spend more time and need more assistance in the class. Those students include those who have been mainstreamed as well as those who have not come from a special ed class. By continually breaking an idea or concept into parts, Mrs. Day discovers what or where the problem lies for a student.

> You can't do it the same way twice unless you go through the entire gamut and then go back again. You can't keep teaching it the same way over and over. The kid didn't get it the first time that way.

The teacher treats all her students similarly but there are some differences directed toward the mainstreamed students. All of the mainstreamed students are academically slower. The teacher is often demanding, pushing, and impatient with those students who are slower in responding and getting their work finished. Many of the mainstreamed students need to be told what comes next in whatever they are doing. Some of the students can accomplish more work within a certain time slot than other students. The ones who do not show their work at each incremental step are usually the academically brighter ones. Those who are used to making mistakes check with Mrs. Day in order to insure that they do not make too many. She is usually guiding and making sure that kids get their work completed with the minimum of mistakes. The teacher's demands, high expectations, and pushing of the mainstreamed students are not as obvious with the rest of the class.

Mrs. Day would not blame a student for a wrong answer but rather place the "blame" on carelessness. Her attitude was that they "obviously" knew the correct answer so why not "fix" it. She did not do this with everyone; only those who would be able to correct their mistakes. This treatment was convincing, nonjudgemental, and even reassuring.

> Sometimes Mrs. Day would say to a student, "You wouldn't believe this. Take a look at this." She would then show the student something they got wrong and say, "Go and fix it."

> All it takes is giving them something they can handle, letting them know you think they can do it and praising them when they do.

If a disabled student demonstrates to the special ed teacher that they can conform to social standards as well as have some academic strength in at least one subject, then the student may be considered for some mainstreaming.

The principal at MacMillian roams in and out of the classes throughout the school daily and has a low-key, nonthreatening relationship with most of the staff. He explains his role in mainstreaming.

> If I wonder why a kid can't be mainstreamed I might go in there and ask the teacher a question like, "Would there be any chance that you might do it?"

A parent can also influence the mainstreaming of a student. One of the sixth grade students described how the change began for him.

> My mother was the one that started having me going to the regular classes. I don't know what she did but it's a lot nicer in the regular class than it was in special ed. They're a lot nicer here.

The willingness of a receiving regular ed teacher is also an important factor in the initial stages of mainstreaming. According to a teacher:

> Not everybody is willing to do it. Even though the staff has been here so long, it's just been the last year that they have been willing to take the little handicapped kids in regular classes. I had to agree to take Jane in the first place. If I had said no, then that's it.

The process of integrating students into regular classes from special ed classes is done on a gradual basis. For some of the students the period of time extends to three years before they are integrated on a full time basis. During that time the mainstreamed students usually remain with the same regular ed teacher and do not change or go on to different grades. Those students also receive less and less services outside of the class. It is as if they shed their past identity as "handicapped" when they are granted entry into the world of "the neighborhood". The sixth grade teacher explains:

> Rosemarie is doing marvelous because we got her out and let her fly. We went slow and it took three years to get her in. She came to me for math first. I think the next year we put her into math and reading. She stayed the rest of the morning with me. So I had her half time first and then full time. It took three years to get there and that worked.
>
> We've had these kids for so long, it's like they are part of our shoelaces.

Description of Children Defined as Handicapped

Timmy

Timmy has been at MacMillian school for eight years. He is fourteen and had been in special ed classes since kindergarten before he began entering the regular ed classes at eleven years old. Timmy remembers that the special ed class was

> A lot different than the neighborhood class. They treat ya differently. When I was in special ed, they treated me like I was somebody else. They didn't treat me like a regular person; like a four year old.

Timmy has spina bifida and is paralyzed from the waist down. He has had numerous operations. He has a shunt tube in his head, kidney problems and other complications. Timmy moves about in his wheelchair with ease.

> I'm the only one in a wheelchair in my class. But there are others that are handicapped. I'm just treated like any other kid.

When he arrives at school in the morning, he usually has a crocheted blanket wrapped around his legs and lap. The blanket is made with shades of light blue and looks like a baby blanket. Timmy's hair often looks wet and is slicked back either with water or Brilcreme. His hair is kept in a crew-cut that dates back to the 1950's.

Timmy enjoys watching basketball and sometimes goes with his father to local college games. Timmy has joined a wheelchair basketball team as its youngest player. The flip-top desk that Timmy uses was built by his father. The height was designed so that Timmy can move his wheelchair beneath the top of the desk and still comfortably rest his arms on the top.

Timmy's mother has been active in her son's educational programming. She has been quite adamant about Timmy not attending the school that her daughter attended which is across the street from their home.

Timmy has been in Mrs. Day's class for two years. "I feel like he is a part of me; like my left arm. I mean I know the mother and everything," Mrs. Day explains. Mrs. Day has said that certain students attempt to "play games" in order to get the attention they need and in order to avoid doing their work. "It's often the disabled kids that have a lot of these games."

> Timmy tries to prove he is right which is another game. I sometimes let him get away with his games and other times I let him know that I know it is a game and I'm not going to play along.

Timmy has a math lab teacher working with him in the classroom during math time. They work on the Levels curriculum and Mrs. Day believes this assistance is good for Timmy.

> His head is always somewhere else and he needs a lot of one-to-one. You give him a book and he'll try to make a flower stand out of it.
>
> Timmy passes level 16 even though he missed a few sections. I said, "Tim I don't have any champagne but if I had it here, we'd have a champagne party. You would all sit here and watch me drink it to the last drop." He passed that test. He was so thrilled he couldn't stand it.

Timmy's Relation to Others

Timmy keeps to himself most of the time, seldom joining others in conversation. His voice is going through adolescent changes: it jumps around in pitch whenever he talks. When the class lines up to go somewhere or to get some food, Timmy waits until everyone has passed by him before he leaves. Timmy's desk and wheelchair are situated within inches of the table where Mrs. Day sits. Often students must straddle and squeeze past Timmy and his wheelchair. Raymond, another student with a handicapping condition, sits very near Timmy. He interacts with Timmy more than most of the others. They have been in the same school together since kindergarten. Their interactions are often similar to a cat and mouse game where one pokes or pushes the other. Sometimes their games look like a form of torment or power play.

Raymond

Raymond's morning ritual during the winter is to come into the room, drop his books off on his desk, take his coat off and hang it in the closet and then sit down on the rug area to take off his black rubber boots. He struggles to get his boots off each time. Raymond can walk with a bit of effort. He has cerebral palsy. His legs move as if he was peddling a bicycle but in a slow, crooked manner. Crutches were ordered for Raymond by a school doctor who saw him once a year but Raymond never used them. Raymond has been in a regular class setting for 3-4 years. Mrs. Day expresses her familiarity with Raymond:

> I practically raised Raymond. He thinks he can fly! There isn't anything he thinks he can't do.

A reading teacher assistant describes Raymond as "a real live wire. And he's a fantastic artist." Whenever the class goes outside after lunch to play, Raymond is usually found sitting on a ledge drawing. A couple of years earlier an art curriculum department head called up Mrs. Day concerning Raymond. The local newspaper then did an article on "a mainstreamed student with an art talent" that appeared in the Sunday edition. When the reporter who wrote the article wanted to meet Raymond and see his work, it took Raymond several weeks before he remembered to bring in his art work. Mrs. Day expresses that Raymond has a lackadaisical, uncaring disposition.

> Raymond, there's somebody trying to help you and you're pulling this flake stuff. He says, "Yeah, I know, what can I do?" Put it next to the front door, write yourself a note. He literally wrote himself a note and stuck it in his pocket. He remembered but the guy didn't come back for another week. You know how neat his whole area is. He's the one with the pile of junk all over the floor. By the time that guy came, it had been stepped on. Raymond said, "Well, you know, that's what happens."

Raymond's Interaction With Others

Raymond moves easily from being apart of the larger group or "one of the boys" to being off on his own.

> David was sitting by himself in the hallway with his back against the wall. Timmy was alone as well as Rosemarie. Raymond was sitting amidst a group of kids.

> Raymond was walking past a group of four boys who were dancing. He stood for a bit looking at one of the boys who usually leads others. Raymond was standing very close to this boy. The boy smiled at Raymond and motioned for him to dance. Raymond almost did but stopped on the verge of starting and then walked away.

He is an accepted member of the class. He knows what to do to enable himself to be included in joke telling, discussions and horsing around in the class. Raymond is the only disabled student accepted by the rest to the point where he can engage others in conversation.

> The boy who told the joke about the coke bottle came over to where Raymond was sitting on Mark's desk. He says, "Hey Raymond, have you heard this joke?" Raymond listens and responds with a smile and some comment.

There are times when others tease Raymond.

> One of the boys in the class walked by Raymond and took a french fry off of Raymond's platter. The boy smiled slyly and Raymond did not acknowledge him at all; totally ignoring him.
>
> The "new" Black boy who wears a black hair net on his head a lot got in Raymond's way as many of the kids were haphazardly lining up by the door. Raymond looses his balance and falls. Two boys reach down to help pull Raymond up onto his feet. They have a hard time getting him up and it is not clear that their assistance was helping or hindering Raymond to establish his balance. No words were expressed by these boys. Once Raymond was standing he does not turn around to look at anyone. The "new" kid walks by again and jabs Raymond. This time it was a bit more blatantly. One of the boys who had helped before and was standing behind Raymond said, "Hey watch it." Nothing more was said.

Raymond becomes the teaser whenever he is near Timmy. Their desks are among the few that are not situated with the majority of the desks in the room and are within arms reach of each other. Raymond will often stare at Timmy sternly. It is a game and Timmy plays along. But it is also a form of harassment.

> Timmy rarely if ever defends himself. But one time a yard stick was resting on Timmy's desk and Timmy grabbed hold of it. Immediately he began to point it at Raymond and was about to do something with it, when Mrs. D. took it away from him. She just placed the stick somewhere else.
>
> Raymond came ambling and wobbling into the room smiling and making cheerful sounds to himself. He pushes Timmy out of his way to get over to his desk. They make some sarcastic remarks back and forth to each other. "I'll punch you out." Raymond lightly jabbed Timmy with his fist. Timmy played along with this playfulness. But when Raymond pushed and squeezed past Timmy again, Timmy had a sour cringe on his face.

David

David is the tallest boy in the sixth grade class, is fifteen years old and does not talk very much. David has never been officially labeled because his mother never wanted him in a special ed class. However, David was currently being considered for a junior high school program and his mother realizes that in order for David to receive the special services he needs, he would have to be officially labeled.

Various people have described David as "neurologically impaired" and "brain damaged." He does have epileptic seizures. Students in David's class know that at twelve o'clock David goes to get a pill. At one point during the year, the class was having a discussion about epilepsy. Mrs. D. asked David if he wanted to tell the class about it and he did.

At MacMillian, David's schedule is arranged so that he does not have to go away from the regular class during conspicuous times. When the students switch for math and reading, David goes to either physical therapy or speech training.

> "We worked out his schedule to accommodate what he needed while making it not look like he is one of the dummies. But the kids know."

In the classroom, David's desk is situated the farthest away from the rest of the class. It is among the few desks against the side blackboard close to the door. There are one or two desks between David and Raymond. David is catty-cornered to Timmy.

Mrs. D. explains that David sits on that side of the room because "he always sits next to me or on top of me or around my neck or someplace."

David accomplishes the most work when Mrs. D. is working closely with him in a concentrated way.

> "He really needs one-to-one if he's going to do anything."

> "David couldn't benefit from a purely oral curriculum. He needs a lot of one-on-one help. But he wants to please. You have to do a lot of drawing things out with David."

The social worker at the school has worked with David and says that "he can read but has a language difficulty." Mrs. D. explains that David is working at a sixth grade level in math. "But he has trouble understanding phrases and fitting words together. He's a good kid and wants to learn."

David's Relation to Others

There is another boy in the class who lives next door to David. Mark and David have been described as "best friends." Yet, during this research, little interaction took place between them during the school day. Mrs. D. remarks about a widening split in their relationship because of diverse ability levels.

> "David knows something is wrong now too. It really is heart breaking for me to see this happening. His best friend has an IQ of 140 and has the patience of the gods but the difference between them is beginning to show. David says to me, 'I know I can do it and that you just showed me but there's something that makes me not be able to do it.' So he knows."

David usually sits alone at his desk either staring at the blackboard, a book, or out into the room. He rarely speaks with other students and they do not extend themselves to him. On one occasion, his birthday, what was meant to be some friendly attention became a venting of some unspoken hostility towards David.

> Someone said it was David's birthday and David was just arriving. Mark seemed excited and rushed out to the hallway as well as several other boys. Something was up. Maybe they gave him some spanks or punches or pounced on him out in the hall. Who knows what went on out there. David finally enters the room and a couple of boys try to get close to him. It was hard to tell what the boys were trying to do to him. One boy, Danny, began acting like a lion tamer with a whip, pushing David back until David had to defend himself with his back against the wall. There was a short tussle between the two boys. It was not one of those friendly spats, either. It ended with them separating. I think David lost his balance and landed on the floor. He stayed there awhile; safe.

Rosemarie

Rosemarie is fifteen years old, has shoulder length sandy hair that looks curled from a permanent. She is taller than most of the other girls in the class and is very thin. She has a lanky, awkward appearance about her with her arms hanging down long and loosely in front of her as she walks. With hunched shoulders and shuffling feet, she looks more disabled than she really is. The braces on her teeth create the image of the typical teenager she is. She usually wears pants, as all the girls do, that are a bit shotty and worn looking. Rosemarie's mother works as an aide in the school. Teachers have described her as "making her daughter cry in front of her class and humiliating her." During the observation period, Rosemarie's mother was not seen.

Rosemarie has a physical disability which affects the joints in the feet, legs, arms and other parts. When Rosemarie walks it looks like she may fall down any second. She does fall quite a lot.

> Mrs. D. is walking out of the courthouse with Rosemarie. All of a sudden Rosemarie falls into the fake greenery that lines the front windows in the lobby. Mrs. D. immediately pulls her back on her feet. Rosemarie smiles weakly and so does Mrs. D.. Some of the other kids who are nearby also smile and two girls try to hold back their laughter by putting their hands over their mouths. Mrs. D. says, "She's trying to become a tulip." "You don't look like a tulip," I said. She smiles and Mrs. D. chirps in, "More like a rose."

Rosemarie was gradually mainstreamed over a period of three years before she was in the regular ed class on a full time basis. The contrast between special ed and regular ed is very clear in Rosemarie's mind.

> "The work was a lot easier in special ed. I didn't have to work so much. But now I'm at level 16 in math and level 14 in reading. At the beginning of the year I got a "D" in math and now I'm getting a "B."
>
> Mrs. D. adds that "she is doing marvelous. It's because we got her out and let her fly. We went slow. It was a wonderful idea in her case."

Rosemarie's desk is situated separately from the majority of the students, next to one of the bookcases that jut out into the room. She is on one side of the partition and another girl's desk is on the other side. Rosemarie can often be seen staring and doing nothing.

Rosemarie's Interaction with Others

Rosemarie has spent most of her school years in special ed classes at MacMillian and interacts with many of her past friends from special ed.

> Rosemarie mingled with the kids with disabilities by joking and laughing with them. When she sat down to eat in the cafeteria, she sat with another girl who was extremely heavy and looked a lot older than the other students. They talked a little bit but not very much. They sat at the end of a long table which went down the middle of the lunchroom not far from the table of kids with disabilities.

Although during the time of this research teasing directed toward Rosemarie was never observed, Rosemarie is quite conscious of anyone teasing her.

> "I liked the special ed class better. I didn't get teased there. When I had braces on my legs I got teased. But when I was in special ed we had a real nice art teacher. Now I have Mrs. X. in art and I get teased. When I got my braces on my teeth, I got teased too."

April

Before April enters the sixth grade classroom for math class, a young man comes into the room carrying a few books. He is told by the teacher to drop them off on any empty desk. About five minutes later, April slowly comes in with the use of her crutches. She is fifteen years old and is being mainstreamed for the first time this year. April seems to be as calm and natural as the rest of the students. But a closer look would reveal that she does not have control of all her actions. Sometimes a spastic-type motion will occur with her head or her arms and then at other times she will be still. When April is working on a task, she has difficulty concentrating on what she is doing for very long. As she bows her head down toward a paper on the desk, she occasionally falls into a motion that is rapidly repeated eight or more times. She pushes her glasses into her nose in the middle and then sticks out her tongue wetting her lips. Both actions happen at once and very fast. April goes about her work extremely slowly and spends most of her time erasing much of what she writes on any paper as if she did not understand what she was suppose to do. Mrs. D. has some reservations about the placement of April.

> "April has got a whole bunch of problems. I don't even know if it was a wise decision to get her in there. See, I never went to the Committee on her. She was just popped in on us from another school district and boom she qualified on this thing and boom she was in there."

Mrs. D. tells how bad April's basic skills are and how she had been in special ed classes for a long time. When April first came into Mrs. D.'s class and was given a new task, April would cry. Mrs. D. told her, "That won't work in here, sweetie. I won't fall for that game."

> "She is working fine but the crying is like eighty five percent. About three weeks ago she cried for the entire week. Her dog died. I mean I'm suppose to teach this kid math?"

A potential problem has arisen in placing April in classes that are appropriate to her ability level.

> "She doesn't go to Joann for reading cause her reading isn't up to that level. And where her reading is, we cannot mainstream her into a third grade. That doesn't make sense either. So where they fit, we put them in. If they don't fit, they don't go out." (into the neighborhood and regular ed)

Even though Mrs. D.'s system of instruction is individualized, it is believed that April could not function there during other periods.

> "We could look at it from a kid's point of view. I think April is on a second or third grade reading level. And I have sixth grade kids. I teach these kids seventh grade material and sixth grade material; some high sixth, some low sixth and I teach these kids fifth grade material. Some kids get fourth grade stuff. But how's it gonna look if she's all by herself doin' third grade stuff? The kids know. It wouldn't be good psychologically."

On the few occasions when April spoke to Mrs. D., her speech was distinct and understandable. During the research period, April never spoke to anyother students. At the end of the hour math class, April gets up, leaves and the young man comes to get her books.

BOXING AND SEPARATING DISABLED CHILDREN

One of the emphasized aspects of mainstreaming in the MacMillian School and in the sixth grade class is "treating everyone the same." Once the children defined as handicapped are mainstreamed, their designated labels are all but thrown out the window and they are treated like members of "the neighborhood." For many of the mainstreamed students this sense of belonging and being "one of the big kids" is a new phenomena. In spite of the matter of fact manner in which the mainstreamed students are included in all activities in the school and in the classroom, one can observe a number of ways in which those children are very much separated or "boxed."

Social Boxing

The predominant way that the handicapped students are "boxed" is through the lack of social interactions with other students, particularly typical children. It is assumed that all children have the necessary skills by which they can mingle, tease, joke and talk with their peers. Many of the mainstreamed children have not had years of experiences with large groups of different children. Even the entire second floor of the school is inaccessible to sixty two children in the school.

> "Of course the social stuff is a big consideration but the kids with disabilities don't socialize. They don't mix academically either and really don't mix in anything," said Mrs. D..

> At the Valentine's Day Dance there were many adults standing on the side of the gym not far from the children or young adults in wheelchairs. Some of the adults would move the kids in wheelchairs to the right and then the left in a gentle swaying motion. They would loop around and do circles as they pushed the chairs moving their bodies in time to the music.

In the sixth grade class, most of the children designated handicapped have their desks situated very much apart from the rest of the class. This kind of "boxing" or isolation removes many opportunities for peer interaction to take place. Sometimes when students go over to the pencil sharpener they get in the way of Timmy, Raymond or David but this is usually rare.

When the class is involved in a large group activity and the students are working together in small teams, the mainstreamed students often end up together. By not mingling with other students, the typical and the disabled students do not have the chance to get to know or help one another.

> Timmy wheels back and tells Raymond, David and the "new" boy that they had gotten it wrong. Someone said, "I told you that was not right." All four of these boys were sitting at the far table working "together" or in the same area. All of them had been labeled. They were not progressing through the directions as quickly as others in the class.

On the occasions when the class goes outside for ten to twenty minutes after lunch, the disabled students either do not go outside at all or they do something by themselves. The only person who sometimes will lean on a ledge and draw is Raymond. This kind of "boxing" occurs when students do not make the effort to join in activities, do not know how to be included, and when the typical children do not think to involve anyone else. One sixth grade girl tells about one time everyone was included in a game.

> "Some of them just stay inside and others will go out and stay on the concrete part. Last year we played soccer and everyone played. We would push the kids in wheelchairs to the bases."

When the disabled children arrive at school in the morning, they have a separate entrance into the school. Their dismissal is also scheduled forty five minutes sooner than the rest of the school.

When a class trip is arranged, anyone in a wheelchair has to have their own bus take them. On one class trip to the city court house, Timmy was taken by himself in a large school bus that could accommodate his wheelchair. The rest of the class jammed into another bus.

> Timmy sat there at the end of the hall by himself waiting for the signal to go. How strange that they would use a regular large bus just for Timmy and not even consider having others ride with him... We get out of the bus and the kids line up outside of the building. Timmy's bus was behind the first bus. The driver helps him out and wheels him up to the rest of the class. He was by himself.

The disabled are also "boxed" according to their academic abilities. None of the mainstreamed children qualify for the gifted program and all of them are working on the lower numbered math levels. These students make up a category sometimes referred to as "the dummies."

> Mrs. D. told a boy to sit in Raymond's desk and Raymond to stay where he was. The boy murmured, "Now I'll flunk and Raymond will get a hundred."

When the Gifted Class meets three afternoons a week, the rest of the class that are not included are divided into two groups according to academic ability. All of the children designated handicapped go to one room and the rest go to another. This obvious "boxing" was evident on one occasion when the Gifted Class was going on:

> As I walked past Mrs. G.'s classroom, I see kids sitting at desks and on the window ledge all facing in one direction; toward the back of the room away from the teacher's desk. They were all watching the television. The expression on the student's faces reminded me of someone who is bored and in a dull stupor. It was the TV blank-out, turn-off blues. These were the kids who were considered not too bright... While the "gifted" kids were being actively engaged and stimulated, the others were penalized by boredom and dull, ordinary work.

TYPICAL CHILDREN

The typical children live in the small surrounding residential community and most walk to school each day. Their families are, with some exceptions, middle class. The range of ways in which the sixth graders come dressed to school include brightly colored dungarees that are the appropriate length, fitted plaid shirts, colorful, jazzy t-shirts, down vests, crisp skirts and tops, as well as frayed dresses and pants, shirts that were too large or too small, sweaters with holes, shoes with heels and, of course, sneakers. Many of the sixth graders are conscious of the appearance of their hair. There are students with long braids, curly permanents, short pixie-like, and medium straight length as well as crew-cut, butch, hair in eyes, long, and medium to short lengths.

The diversity of students could be observed in their academic abilities as well. For example, during a math class students can be seen working on adding, subtracting, and dividing numbers as well as some basic algebra and geometry. Some students are working on a third, fourth, or fifth grade level and others on a seventh, eighth or ninth grade level. There are at least three students who have been tested to have IQ's above 140 and others who have tested below 80.

There are noticeable differences in the work styles of the students in the sixth grade. Some of the students are very self-reliant and can work on their own for long stretches at a time. Some students can accomplish more work within a given time slot than for other students.

There are also a number of students who need to be told what comes next in whatever they are doing.

The students who are used to making mistakes check with the teacher frequently. She is usually guiding them and making sure that students get their work completed with the minimum of mistakes. Sometimes the students are asked or permitted to work together as a team.

> She says to two boys, who were about to work on the same math ditto, that if they wanted they could work on it together. Both boys smiled and were quite excited by this opportunity. They quickly find a spot together at a table.

Various students form groups. While the separation into groups is evident, they are not exclusive. When the teacher was in the process of planning a pre-seventh grade program, she identified several of these groups. They included: the mainstreamed students, those who are borderline in terms of ability (in "no-mans land"), those who will be retained and will repeat, and the gifted.

> "These gifted kids are having a hard time with the other kids. They formed a click they named "The Pests." Their image to the other kids is that they are perfect and don't do anything wrong so they came up with that name. The other kids make fun of them. It's the same as with "The Dummies." They have problems too. The gifted kids develop what I call "The Big Head Syndrome" where they get too big for their britches." (Mrs. D.)

> Mrs. D. introduces her daughter to Danny. He responds by saying, "Yes I'm Danny and I'm Gifted!"

> David sits down fairly close to where I am. I ask him what is happening in the afternoon. "There's the gifted class and I go upstairs to another teacher."

In addition to the above groups, there is a clear social separation between the boys and the girls in the class. During a debate about the draft and women, the majority of the students expressed in a very matter-of-fact manner that men and women should be treated the same. However, this opinion does not demonstrate itself in this class. Examples from gym class competitions, separate seating in the classroom, dancing, talking, and lining up demonstrate that the sexes are quite separate. When the boys are on one side of the room and the girls on another, it is as if there are two different classes going on in the same room.

Another less obvious separation of groups in the class can be observed between the Black students and the White students. The White students do not sit with the Black students in the classroom or in the cafeteria. The boys seem to mingle with each other more so than the girls.

> As the four White girls were talking, a Black girl had been looking on but she was seated two desks away from the four girls.

> A record with a driving beat is put on and several girls begin moving around to the music. At first the only people moving were two or three Black girls.

INTERACTIONS AND HELPING

Among the students in the sixth grade class, there is a natural, spontaneous quality which enables them to respond to each other in a frank, familiar manner. They seem to be able to do or say just about anything with each other. If someone asks for some help from someone else, it is usually granted.

> Rosemarie sits at her desk and Erin, one of the advanced students, walks by her. Rosemarie asked her a question and Erin stops to look at her paper. Erin responds in a matter-of-fact, easy way and then moves on.
>
> One girl asked a boy near her if he could help her with the calculator. He went over to her and jiggled the wire in the socket and it worked again.

A reading teaching assistant explains that

> "Mrs. D. has kids helping kids. If there is one who is good in one area, she's got another in the class who's having trouble in that area. You team them up and put them together."

One common way that the students, particularly the boys, relate to one another is through verbal put downs. A kind of "survival of the fittest" can be observed often between those in the class who do not have much status and those more respected members who can be teased or pounded upon. The person who receives the venting is usually someone who does not know how to defend her/himself. The teasing, poking, pushing and/or threatening statements can be directed toward anyone, typical or disabled. But it does not happen to the strong-willed or the ones who can fight back. Once a student allows someone to take advantage once, that gives the person license to do it again. It is as if those who cannot defend themselves have not been told or taught how to do this. For some students this is a necessary skill to be learned in order to survive without a lot of hassles and problems:

> Raymond goes over to Mark's desk and sits on top of it. Mark is the quiet one who reads a lot, doesn't like Disco and who made the intricate Valentine for Mrs. D.. He keeps to himself and doesn't talk a lot. He is academically extremely bright, I'm told. Raymond proceeds to pat Mark on the head. Mark, at first, ignored what Raymond was doing but couldn't help taking notice after the sixth pat. Perhaps he thought or hoped he would stop but Raymond didn't. "What are you doing, Raymond?" Mark asked. Raymond didn't say anything and even took Mark's cheeks between his hands and squeezed them together. Then Raymond did begin to get more fierce with his pats. It began to take on the appearance of minor physical abuse. (O.C. Mark was either extremely polite or just didn't know how to defend himself. I think it was the latter. Mark clearly did not like what was happening but could not figure out the tactic to stop what was going on.)
>
> Mark goes over to the pencil sharpener and turns to the boy using the overhead projector. Mark says, "It should be raised. Up. You know up, not down. You get it? Up!" He demonstrates and accentuates with arm motions as he says those things. The other boy does not respond.
>
> Raymond and Timmy were staring at each other for awhile as if they were having a who-can-come-up-with-the-most-fearless-or-toughest-face contest. Timmy turned away.

Curriculum

At the MacMillian School different curricula are utilized for the regular ed classes and the special ed classes. For the five full time mainstreamed students and two to three part time mainstreamed students in the sixth grade class (who had come from special ed classes), the contrast between what they get in the regular class and what they get in special education is apparent in terms of both content and process. In the special ed classes four or five content areas are worked on the entire school year. The process by which the content is taught often involves asking a student to learn a particular concept continuously for months and even years. Many students reach a "critical learning stage" which is the point where a person is saturated and cannot or will not learn the concept. In the regular ed class, specifically the sixth grade class, all the required subject areas are covered and by presenting varied activities the students learn the basic material as well as additional content and concepts.

> By doing multiplication or division or graphs, they learn something else... In special ed, they don't have to do sixth grade ancient history in social studies. They can do whatever they want. In Health you can say, The kids will learn self hygiene. They will learn how to wash their hair and clothes. Not much academics at all. They don't have textbooks like we have. (Mrs. Day)

> I pass a small room where there are three kids in wheelchairs sitting in front of a TV monitor. Two of them were somewhat looking at it and the other looked to be asleep. It was like they were plugged into the TV as if it was insulin or penicillin. They sat there like zombies and the TV was baby sitting.

The mainstreamed students are exposed to more varied curriculum content material in the regular ed class and more opportunities to learn through the process of individualizing. Mrs. Day emphasizes the capabilities of her mainstreamed students. "Statistics show that kids moving from a special class to a regular class do considerably better."

> David walked into the room after standing by the outside door with his thermometer. "WOW!" He exclaimed looking at the thermometer in his hand. "What happened?" I asked. "The temperature just went down so fast; like this." He motioned with his finger. (O.C. Who says this kid is not getting something out of all this? How hard it would be to verbalize what he actually learned. Something this positive must be reaping some results.)
>
> Timmy wheeled over to Mrs. Day and showed her his booklet which he had filled in. She immediately told him that he had the wrong numbers down for temperatures for the celsius readings. "There's no way you could have gotten that number. Go back and do the farenheit and celsius temperatures for three different locations in the room."

When a special ed student is mainstreamed, often the formalities of labeling and Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are either forgotten or not required.

> To be in special ed you have got to have something wrong with you. If they are in a neighborhood class, then they are no longer labeled.

Some question exists around the value of the traditional IEP for the regular ed teacher as it is written at MacMillian. Mrs. Day expresses her thoughts:

> I think the special ed teachers make up their own objectives. I think they make up their own units too. So in Health they probably do a whole thing on nutrition. Which was in essence on a ditto that said, 'Circle the fruit or a pineapple.' That's tough. You know, the way you'd do it would be to have the kids up to their ears in making lemonade. Then you give them this ditto and then they pass the IEP, see. Now if I had to do an IEP on the sixth grade material, I'd be writing for years. And for what?"

The sixth grade teacher was never involved in the writing of an IEP.

> I think the major difference between special ed and the neighborhood classes is that they have to do IEP's which we don't. Which in the last four years I've never gotten a clarification on whether I'm supposed to do IEP's on my mainstreamed kids or not.

Getting Ready and Program Shopping

In the sixth grade, the teacher must keep in mind what her students are expected to know in the next grade. The Levels curriculum has assisted in standardizing the necessary content in math and reading. Much responsibility is placed on the teachers to get their students ready for middle school.

For the mainstreamed sixth graders "getting ready" includes finding a junior high school program or class that can accommodate their needs as well as coincide with the philosophy of the teachers who have had the students for numerous years. Some of the mainstreamed students have been at the MacMillian School for nine or more years. Caring and concern for the future of these students characterize the actions of the staff.

> We keep up with these kids and we know what's going on with them after they leave our school. We take care of these kids cause it's so small in this place, you can't help it.
>
> They get put into a system where they are with about six, seven and eight hundred kids. And you know they aren't gonna get what they need and then they get lost in the shuffle. That's the sad part. But you can't keep them forever and you have to let them go... A regular kid is going to survive out there one way or the other. These handicapped kids, they've got more against them from the beginning. They either make it or they don't make it.

> "It worries me that they are going to make it and I don't have to read about them in the paper. Last year when the newspapers had the graduates of Hutton only one kid of mine did I see in with the graduating class. I would have had thirty kids that I would recognize. I only recognized one name; you want them to make it and contribute to society. And not wind up in the front section of the Metropolitan Section."

One of the actions taken before "letting go" the mainstreamed students is to go on "Shopping Expeditions" for possible programs in other schools. These expeditions are done quietly and clandestinely by the sixth grade teacher, a school social worker and one to two other teachers (usually fifth grade teachers) because the district does not approve of such shopping. The principal has told them not to go with too large a group that would look conspicuous. They go during school time and aides or substitutes cover for the teachers. As Mrs. D. pointed out,

> "You see there is a rule that you can't choose a program because of the particular teacher. But everyone does choose the program that way anyway. It's supposed to be based on the number of kids in the class and what they do."

The formal procedure is to send the names of the students needing a junior high school program to the main district administration building offices and then they will find a program.

> "If we waited and sent the name down, they would end up in a gifted program and it takes a whole year to place them there." (fifth grade teacher)

During one such shopping expedition to a junior high school, the women were greeted by a school guidance counselor who led everyone to a small, glassed-in, sound-proof study room in the library. A teacher for the neurologically impaired (N.I.) joined the group. They discussed the capabilities and needs of four of the six sixth grade mainstreamed students. Then the N.I. teacher explained his program and philosophies. After an hour, everyone was discussing specifically the type of goals, materials and possible mainstreaming that would take place with various students:

> The N.I. teacher wanted to know if they wanted to know how he felt today and if they wanted a decision that day. Jane pipied in, "Well yes." He said that he wanted to see copies of David's records and said that he didn't make the final decisions. Jane said that she had to do an update of his psychological tests and then would send it to him. (O.C. All this talk about others making decisions sounded like such jargon. The people in that room were making decisions right then and there and no one would bother to call them on it.)

Problems that contribute to the difficulty of finding programs for the mainstreamed students include: schools that are inaccessible, programs that do not integrate or mainstream, assigning "proper" labels, programs with very low expectations, programs that do not teach basic skills, the lack of appropriate programs at all and teaching styles that offend the search group. Mrs. Day specifies the problems as:

> In order to be served in many of these programs, these kids have to have a label.
>
> If we can't do any more shopping, I have to go back on my promise that I said that we'd look for a program for these kids. We've looked and it doesn't look too promising.
>
> I have parents of eighth and ninth graders to this day come back and tell me that these kids are going crazy because there's a math teacher in Murphy. If I hear once more about this math teacher at Murphy. She must have horns the way she's been described to me. The kids hate her and this, that and another thing. She doesn't teach like you. She doesn't explain to me. And they're all failing math.

PARENTS

The parents of the mainstreamed children have been involved at various stages of their children's sixth grade year. The parents are included in any Committee on the Handicapped meetings that are held during the year. The sixth grade teacher calls them to inform them on possible program changes as well as academic progress. Mrs. D. has expressed the importance of the parents having an ally such as herself:

> "They (parents) have a lot of confidence and that is a big thing right there. So that what you say to them they know that you are trustworthy and that you're not trying to slide something over on them."

> "Because it's (the school) so small, we have terrific parent involvement. But I've always been close to my parents. I think it's because when something new is going to happen, you talk it up a lot and then later people will say, 'What took you so long?' So he (a superintendent) talks it up and people hear about it till they're sick of it and then when a decision has to be made, everyone is for it and use to it... You talk to your parents. They know you. They know what's going on. You say here's what I want to do and they say, 'Well didn't you do it yet?' And that works for everything."

OTHER SUPPORTIVE PERSONNEL

Joe C. spends all of his time in a small room that is connected to the gymnasium. Within the room is a doorway leading to a lavatory recently built for wheelchair accessibility. A column of old lockers line one wall. The room is bare and stark with nothing on the walls and no bookcases. Joe is thirty three years old and has been a reading teaching assistant at the MacMillian School for seven years. He attended the school in the 1950's for eight years, went to a city high school and then went to the University of Illinois. Joe has cerebral palsy and requires a wheelchair to move about.

Joe sees thirteen students, each who have multiple disabilities, on a one-to-one basis every day. He sees himself as a reading teacher, a counselor, a friend and a role model for his students:

> "There are a lot of intangibles to things other than the basic reading and writing. It's also contact and knowing that somebody cares and somebody is trying. There's somebody they can come and talk to and this kind of thing. I end up doing a little counseling on the side because I figure if a kid comes in and he's got a problem and he needs to talk that day, then that's the primary thing we should be concerned with. We can really do the reading later."

> "Most of these kids have never seen somebody my age that's in a wheelchair and independent doing what I do. Because back a number of years ago when I first started, it took me about six months to convince the kids that I was one of their teachers. Because in their heads you can only be a teacher if you are walking around."

For several years Joe has taken a group of his students to his apartment on a field trip where he makes lunch for them:

> "I feel better about teaching kids that way. I feel I have more to give by doing that than, in some ways, what I do here. In effect, anybody could sit here and do what I do. But not anybody could take the kids on a field trip like that and show them what it's like and what it's all about. It's really kind of a high for me."

Dealing with stereotypic images and negative attitudes toward disabilities is something Joe confronts directly.

> "If it's on a one-to-one situation and a kid does something, then I have the opportunity. I'll call him over and sit down with him and talk to him a little bit. And nine times out of ten, he won't do that again. I just say, 'Hey, look, I'm different than you but you

> have two feet and I've got four wheels. And that's about it. You can do some things that I can't do, but my head's on straight.' Nothing really heavy because if you do that, the kid's gonna not get it in his head anyway."

Joe sometimes sees some of the mainstreamed students but usually works with those with more severe conditions. Whether or not a disabled student ought to be considered for integration depends, Joe feels, on the severity of the disability.

> "I've got one child now who I think is pretty bright but he's basically a non-verbal kid. That kind of limits things. We use the communication board. A lot of times I can tell what he wants and what he's trying to tell me before he really has to do it."

Integration is viewed as a "really good idea" by Joe and should be determined by whether or not a student needs to be further challenged.

> "It's got to be done on an individual basis. You can't make any blanket generalizations. You just start someplace and you go from there. It's based on how positive the experience is... You don't just throw a kid in there and say let's see what you're gonna find."

According to Joe, integration is restricted at the MacMillian School for several reasons. One is the inaccessibility of the second floor. Second, not many of the students who are in special ed are being recommended for mainstreaming,

> "There are kids I might try to do it with but I'm not in the position to do that. I'm just a little 'ole indian and not a chief."

Third is the receptiveness of regular classroom teachers to take a child from special ed.

> "There are some teachers that are scared stiff that if you look at a kid cross-eyed, he's gonna cry or wet on the floor or something else. And that's not the way it works. It takes a long time to change attitudes."

When a student from special ed is about to be introduced to other students in a neighborhood class, Joe believes strongly in "the least preparation" of the class.

> "If I was gonna come into your class and you say, 'Here's Joe and he's got CP and he needs help with this, that and another thing,' You put all the other kids on the defensive and they think my god, how will we deal with this kid. But if you just kind of invite the kid in there and your aide introduced me and you kind of let things happen naturally; and you don't sit there and let someone beat me over the head or something like that. There's certain information probably you'll need to

> explain to the kids but don't give them any more than they need. Because it will mess up the natural process. You deal with me as a person and not with some special thing that's got a problem that you've got to bite your nails over.

Principal

Mr. Massey is a man in his late fifties. A short grayish-black mustache appears on his upper lip. He is thin in stature, about five foot eight inches and has a protruding belly that makes his shirts fit tightly. He wears checked pants and a patterned shirt. Mr. Massey does not pretend to be a city slicker and would more easily fit in any rural environment. When he talks he ends many sentences with a kind of uncomfortable, yet warm, smile.

One may be able to find Mr. Massey in his little office talking to staff, children or answering the school phone. Mr. Massey can also be found carrying things around the halls or in any one of the classrooms. He roams in and out, sits down in class for awhile or even covers for a teacher if the need arises:

> I know all the kids and the teachers. I'm in all the classes almost every day. They don't think anything of it. They go right on with their work.
>
> Mr. Massey peaks into a busily working classroom and tries to get the teacher's attention. She comes over to him and he asks her if she had decided on entering someone in a math contest. The teacher said she thought it would be fine, that she would fill out the sheet and give it to him. "This is a newly mainstreamed boy who has been doing so well in math and we think the math contest will be something he can do well," he says to me.

On one occasion, Mr. Massey spent an entire morning in a second grade class covering for a teacher who was attending a "Committee" or "team" meeting. This was a meeting concerning a typical child who was having problems in reading.

Mr. Massey has been able to get several special services located at his school. One is the inclusion of an occupational therapist. (Having an occupational therapist in the school had been illegal in the state.) The school already has a physical therapist. Another feature the school has of which the principal is proud is a heated swimming pool.

> It's warmer than we'd really like but it's for them. It's a therapy as well as a recreational thing.

Mr. Massey has had something to do with the eighty or more teaching assistants, aides and volunteers who work at the school daily. He has also been instrumental in having a Pre-First grade class for developmentally delayed children at the school. Mr. Massey repeats often that when the children in the Pre-First class go back into a regular class, they will not have any special ed label attached to them.

Mr. Massey describes certain teachers in the school as "doing a marvelous job" and "good people". According to Mr. Massey an excellent teacher is someone:

> "who is willing to work with any kind of kid. I'm talking about any color of any kind. Or a kid with a handicap who she feels she can do something for or something with or do something together. It is a teacher who, for the most part, is knowledgeable and is willing to individualize. Because if you're getting in the area of mainstreaming ninety nine times out of a hundred, you're going to come up with a kid who is behind grade level in one area or another by virtue of the fact that he's been out of school so long."

> "You've got to have a teacher who respects children as individuals... Treat them with respect. And generally and usually it's going to be returned by the kid. The teacher cannot be a bleeding heart kind of a push-over. Do your own thing."

As Mr. M. sat down briefly with the sixth grade teacher, Mrs. D., he summarizes his feelings in regard to the teachers who are involved with mainstreaming by stating:

> "You have to have good teachers like (Mrs. D.)."

> "Teachers have to be willing to accept these kids and this is very important. If they aren't open, then it doesn't work very good."

IS MAINSTREAMING WORKING IN THIS ENVIRONMENT?

The integration of students with handicapping conditions in the observed regular sixth grade classroom is apparent. With four mainstreamed full-time and two to three others part-time, there are more students designated handicapped in this regular education class than in any other in this school. But the sheer numbers of students does not inform us of whether or not this integration is working or is successful. The ways in which the program is and is not working can be briefly summarized to help us understand the successful and unsuccessful aspects of this mainstreaming program.

The system of individualizing instruction is an important and strong aspect of this mainstreaming program and contributes to it's success. The standardized Levels curriculum that is used district-wide lends itself to allowing students to work at different levels of difficulty and abstraction. The sixth grade teacher has the creative foresight to organize and present the Levels curriculum so that the varied ability levels of the students might be challenged and developed. This kind of sequencing of concepts allows for challenging and successful completion of required tasks. By allowing the students more responsibility in their own learning, offering choices to the students and having concrete tasks for them to engage in, the students were progressing at their own rate.

Related to the individualized presentation of the Levels curriculum are the high expectations placed upon the students. While each student is working at his or her own developmental level, the teacher expects and demands as much from the disabled students as she does from the typical students. This takes some getting use to for the students who have come from special ed classes. But they do progress and achieve in this setting.

Even scheduling contributes to the smoothness of the program. When a schedule of daily activities is being proposed to mainstream a particular student from special ed into a regular ed class, the integration process is often organized on a gradual basis. This allows for the academic and social adjustments to occur in a more humane, natural way for the student rather than overwhelming the student with change and newness all at once. When the classes switch for reading or math those students who are mainstreamed full-time receive out-of-class adjunct services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy or remedial help. For one student a math lab teacher agreed to come into the math class to work with the boy instead of requiring him to leave the class, a requirement which could add to feelings of difference.

In considering programmatic aspects that do not work in this setting, it is necessary to separate the total school environment from the in-class environment of the observed sixth grade classroom. While they definitely impact on one another, the success of one does not necessarily reflect the success of the other. The overall mainstreaming that occurs in the school in general cannot be considered a successful or even a good example of a mainstreaming program. The sixth grade class, however, could be viewed as successful. It does, however, have some problems that impinge on its smooth working.

The degree of integration of students with handicapping conditions within this elementary school is minimal. There are several factors that contribute to the prevalence of segregation of these students. One is the inaccessibility of the entire second floor of the school which limits the numbers of students from entering numerous classes. The disabled students are thus physically denied entry into "the neighborhood" and "real" world of the second floor.

Another contributing factor is the minimal involvement of parents, teachers and principal in encouraging and seeking more integration of more disabled students. Only in extreme situations are students considered for mainstreaming. The student must not be "too" physically disabled, must already be socially conforming, and be able to do "some" basic skills. If a parent requests a regular ed placement rather strongly and persistently, integration may occur. Even special ed teachers in the school do not advocate for a child's integration to occur. Teacher expectations are extremely low in the special ed classes. Thus, the special ed program is not geared toward developing those skills and capabilities that are necessary to even be considered for regular ed placement. Further, there is no coordination of programming between special ed and regular ed teachers.

Consideration of regular ed placement for a disabled student is done so informally that it is not anyone's responsibility or concern. Difficulties in making placements have also resulted because of the lack of involvement of individuals involved with the disabled student. When integration is being discussed, it is essential to involve all of the staff who have and will have contact with the student. If this does not occur, then certain individuals will feel less responsibility for the already-made decision and in the success of the student in "making it." For example, on one occasion, the sixth grade teacher referred to April, one of the designated handicapped students, as "just popping into Math class one day. I didn't sit in on any of the meetings on her and I have reservations about her placement." Mrs. D. would, it seems, have more of a stake in April's success if she had been invited to those meetings.

One factor that ought to be considered in assessing how a program is working is the social integration of the students. Within the observed regular ed classroom problems of social isolation (I have called this "boxing.") exist among the mainstreamed students. If students are being "boxed" then this is contrary to the ideals of integration. This "boxing" of those who are "different" is viewed as the individual's problem and is thus not something that a teacher or principal thinks they can or should address. There is a contradiction here between the observed "social boxing" and the teacher's belief that "everyone is treated the same." That disabled students in the sixth grade are treated differently was discussed earlier. Even if peer teaching is utilized, it is often done among the lower functioning members of the class. No real efforts are made to deal with the separation of the mainstreamed students.

Lastly, the clandestine exploration of feasible junior high school programs for the graduating disabled students has become a real problem for the regular ed teacher and the continued workings of the mainstreamed program. "Adequate" programs are scarce and it is necessary to do scouting or "program shopping" to see what is available. If the district openly allowed and planned for those who have and feel responsible for the student to confer with others, there would be less of a feeling of dumping and sending the student "down the tube."

The P.H. School and the staff are dedicated to providing a good education for their students in a small, intimate environment. Past reputations about the school as a totally segregated setting are unfounded today. With small classes and experienced staff, the school resenbles a private school environment. Various staff stress that when a student is mainstreamed that individual should have a "successful experience" and not be "low man on the totem pole."

I believe that the mainstreaming that is going on there is working well in regard to the academic aspects of schooling. The system of individualizing in the sixth grade class is one that ought to receive particular attention and can be a powerful model for others. Yet no program is without its potential weak points, aspects that need to be improved. Of particular concern are the social aspects discussed earlier. Perhaps through training workshops, in-service, etc. those teachers and administrators who are so dedicated to children can expand their awarenesses of the possibilities of enhancing the school's mainstreaming programs.

CHAPTER 10

"I've Been Doing This Wrong All These Years": Mainstreaming 11 to 13 Year Olds In A Suburban Elementary School

by

Mary Cantey

The School

> "We have, I think, a very good school in a lot of different ways." (Principal, April 2, p. 26)

Crestview is a suburban school located approximately ten miles from Central City. It is one of ten elementary schools (K-5) in the district. There are also four middle schools (6-8) and one very large high school.

The school setting is peaceful and tranquil. The neighborhood typifies a "middle America" suburb with neatly kept homes and manicured lawns, a dog lazing on the front steps here, a mailman making his rounds there. It is at the end of a quiet "no outlet" street with a newly surfaced circular drive in front, a paved parking lot to the right, and a few picnic tables and some shrubbery completing the scene.

The school was constructed in 1964 and is a neat one story structure that, according to the principal, "can be kind of confusing". A front view of the building reveals a rather traditional, though modern, brick facade with one hexagonal unit jutting out to the left of the main entrance. An aerial view reveals a rectangular building with four hexagonal structures attached - one on the left end of the rectangle and two in the back, plus the one visible from the front. A venture into the interior reveals that office space, work rooms, gymnasium, library, kitchen and cafeteria are in the rectangular portion of the building. Classrooms are in the four hexagonal clusters, each cluster containing six classrooms, a small planning/conference room, a small storage room, and a "common activities" space in the center.

All classrooms are fully carpeted, hexagonal in shape, and identical in design. There are windows along the entire outside wall of each one and chalkboards and bulletin boards along three other walls. The remaining two "walls" are folding wooden partitions adjacent to the "common activities" portion of the cluster. Also, there is a sink, water fountain, and small toilet room for each classroom. The rooms are equipped to a large extent with movable furniture--tables and chairs, cabinets and shelves on rollers, teacher desk and chair, and student "table desks" and chairs scaled to the size of the children occupying the room. Most of the classrooms are bright and colorful. Many have an abundance of student work on display, mobiles and posters hanging from the ceilings, and bulletin boards full of schedules, announcements, calendars, pictures, and seasonal displays.

There are 540 students in the building who come from diverse backgrounds.

> This is basically a middle class community, although it has a pretty diverse population that we pull from. When you look at the houses close by, it looks like the well-to-do or upper middle class, and they probably are because the price range for the houses in the immediate area are probably starting at $45,000 upwards to $95 or $100,000. But our population is pulled about 50% from single dwelling homes and also about 50% from apartments or trailer parks. (Principal, (April 2, p. 25)

The majority of the students are Caucasian, although 15%--a high percentage for this suburban area--fall into minority categories that include Black, Oriental, and Hispanic.

The population is diverse, also, in terms of parental backgrounds and occupations.

> I would estimate between 30 and 40% of our kids come from single parent families. Also, a lot of the kids that are with regular two-parent family type situations have probably gone through a divorce or a separation. (Principal, April 2, p. 25)

The area is multi-industrial. "There's the businessman, professional people, a lot of GE, a lot of Miller's . . . lots of people working in a wide variety of occupations. (Principal, April 2, p. 25)

Because of the industries and the high concentration of apartment complexes in the area, the population is very mobile. "Our enrollment stays about the same, but they're different students all the time. In the last year or two our turnover rate has been about 42%." (Principal, February 6, p. 9)

There are 31 full-time professional staff members at Crestview. This includes the principal, an administrative assistant, a librarian, and a nurse in addition to 21 classroom teachers and six instructional resource people (a special education teacher, a learning disabilities teacher, a physical education teacher, an art teacher, a music teacher, and a reading teacher. There are four part-time professionals--a school psychologist, a speech teacher, an instrumental music teacher, and a strings teacher. The principal describes the faculty as follows:

> There's an interesting mixture of different personalities. There's a lot of them who're outgoing and enthusiastic. There're the people more quiet and reserved. I think there's a basic tenor that all of them are good instructional teachers. . . . They know what they have to teach, and they use a variety of methods to get it across. . . . and there's a variety of ages. . . . Probably the average teaching experience in the building is from seven to twelve years, up in that range. . . . The average age of the staff I would guess to be 30, maybe 33, 37--somewhere in there. (April 2, p. 32)

There is little staff turnover. In a typical year, one or perhaps two teachers move, go on maternity leave, return to college, or retire.

Although the staff seems to have it together in terms of instructional talents, the diversity in personalities and age may have some ramifications for comradeship and social interactions.

> I've never been a member of a staff where people knew so little about one another. Nobody will sit and talk personally. It's more about kids, about school, about the school system. It's the only staff I've been on where people don't do things together outside of school. . . . And it's not the entire system. It seems to be this particular school. (Teacher, April 2, p. 15)

Another staff member was not as sure that an attitude of general disattachment was unique to Crestview. "I don't know that it's just particularly this staff or if it's gotten to be kind of an attitude of all teachers everywhere is not getting involved." (Teaching Assistant, March 31, p. 6) A reluctance to be open with some colleagues was affirmed by another teacher who said to me during an informal interview in the teachers' room, "I'm sorry about the pauses in the conversation. What I say depends on who comes in. There are some things I don't want to say in front of just anyone." (Teacher, March 7, p. 10) Another staff member described the guarded stance sometimes taken by staff in this way:

> Here teachers are very careful about what they say about a child. If they suspect a problem, they will call in a specialist and say you decide what the problem is. It's not my job. I'm not prepared for that. Then if the specialist says the child is LD or something, the teacher will agree or not agree. I think they see their role as very cut and dry. (March 28, p. 3)

The staff is divided into teams. The professional staff who are not regular classroom teachers have been designated as the "resource team." This designation seems to serve an organizational need to label the group rather than any functional purpose. The 21 classroom teachers are divided into six additional teams, each having a common daily schedule. The principal encourages "the teaming idea" but admits there is no set way of implementing the practice in the school. The composition of the teams and the number of persons on each change from year to year and depend on which teachers feel they can work cooperatively, the number of students at each grade level, and the building's physical layout. This year there is one kindergarten team, two first-second grade teams, one third grade team, and two fourth-fifth grade teams. Although the number of teachers assigned to a team varies from two to four, the principal explained that pairs of teachers usually work together so that four-person teams, in practice, tend to function as two two-person teams.

> As I have described it to parents and to others, probably 90% of the time the kids in those two classrooms will be in those two classrooms during the whole day. Very seldom will they move out of those two rooms. They will move back and forth between them, but they probably won't be going to another class. . . . There has been a general guideline that if a child is placed within a team, the teachers will try to accomodate that particular child within that given team instructionally. (Principal, April 2, p. 27)

The principal feels that teaming increases the instructional options open to students. He explains that in a self-contained classroom a good teacher can usually have three instructional groups for a given academic area--a high group, an average group, and a low group.

> By putting teachers together, ~~we have said, "Look,~~ if none of them teach similar paced groups, with a four-man team you can multiply three times four and get 12 different instructional levels offered by that particular team. For a two-man team, probably six different instructional levels. So, that's what we've tried to do, to use it as a means of putting the child as close to his instructional level as we can. (April 2, p. 28)

Although teaming facilitates homogeneous grouping for reading and mathematics instruction, heterogeneous grouping is used for all other activities. Students are assigned to homeroom teachers as "a planned heterogeneous group." This means that the high, average, and low achievers are distributed equitably among teachers within a team so that homerooms reflect a mixture of abilities. "Probably the kids know who are the bright kids and who are the low kids, but there's not a homeroom that's 'the dummy room' or anything else. It's pretty much set up on a heterogeneous basis." (Principal, April 2, p. 29)

In spite of the merits of teaming, teachers still cope with a wide range of abilities for skill instruction as well as other activities. For example, a third grade teacher who was interviewed has a second to fifth grade range of reading levels in her language class. (~~Teacher,~~ March 28, p. 9) ~~For the most part,~~ Instruction appears to be in groups of 20 to 24 students and is geared to the average students in the group. At least one teacher voiced this observation:

> I think for the most part 80% of the building does group instruction, teaching to 20 kids at a time. Absolutely. That's how it's done. . . . Math is taught as a group. Social studies as a group. The teachers for math and reading switch. Like one teacher might teach the high level fourth and stuff like that, but social studies is an entire group. Language is an entire group. (April 16, pp. 12-13)

Although none were solicited, very few complimentary things were said about the school in general. On the other hand, one or two people were very critical. One teacher commented, "I don't like the openness of the school for the kids. . . . Some kids need some structure and some stability, and I don't see them getting it in this type of environment." (April 2, pp. 14-15) Another teacher was somewhat more vocal in her criticisms of the school:

> It's not settled enough. Too hyper. There's lots of pressure on the students and the teachers. The philosophy is to let the kiddies have a good time. It's not nailed in enough on basics. The teachers are free to keep their own rooms settled in their own way, but I often have to close the doors to keep out the noise. . . . When the school first opened, it was turmoil. Open classes. Non-graded. It was wild. And the groupings were ridiculous. You could have had the same groupings within your own class, but instead they mixed them all up. "That banana school." The community still says that. (April 2, pp. 10-11)

The Principal

> "I tell the teachers they have to be ready to have visitors. If they are afraid for people to come in and see what we're doing, then something's wrong and the problem is here and we have to work on it." (Principal, February 6, p. 15)

Jerry Fitzpatrick appears to be about forty years old, about six feet tall, and of medium build. He has a rather casual, friendly appearance and a warm and helpful manner. He seems to be of an unpretentious nature, unassuming but solid in his beliefs and values. He has been at Crestview since it was built in 1964--as a teacher for three years and as principal since then. He has a doctorate in Community Education.

Jerry feels that "a lot of it [the school] reflects my beliefs and personality." (April 2, p. 26) When asked what some of those beliefs are, he talks of multi-level instructional teams, heterogeneous grouping, and the importance of putting students "at their best instructional level." He also believes in good communication between homes and school. He explains, "I think you'll find we're very open about what we do here, and that usually satisfies the parents." (February 6, p. 15) But Jerry goes beyond that by promoting positive two-way communications between teachers and parents.

> I try to encourage teachers to let parents know what is happening. We do that through sending work home or through parent conferences or PTA meetings and things like that. . . . I've tried to encourage parents to come in and see what's happening in the building and to get involved. Again, I guess it's a basic philosophy of mine that if the parents and the teachers are working together, rather than in opposition to each other, ultimately the kid is going to benefit a great deal more. (April 2, p. 29)

Jerry also professes that

> I am a very big believer in professionalism. . . . I'm all for them [unions] from the standpoint of getting a better standard of living, but I think a lot of it has emphasized "Teach to the average. Do the minimum amount." That kind of thing. Some of their attitudes and feelings tend to come out in that particular way, and it distresses me. . . . I don't like the idea of the administration and the staff being on two separate wave lengths, the union versus the other guys. (April 2, pp. 32-33)

Jerry went on to say that union contracts sometimes result in "a great deal of flexibility [being] taken away from the building, from the teachers, and from the kids in the long run." (April 2, p. 33)

In keeping with his beliefs about professionalism, Jerry seems to have a healthy respect for teachers and their abilities. He believes in giving teachers as much freedom as possible. The teachers are expected to be at school each day, but are not asked to report in or out. He views his role as a supervisor of teachers as an opportunity "to provide them with alternatives which I think everybody needs anyhow. . . . Most of my ideas I get from teachers by observing in the classroom, and I pass them on to somebody else." (April 2, p. 32) Also, teaching teams are based to a large extent on who teachers want to team with. Jerry does not believe in forcing teachers into action.

> That's never a good situation when someone is being forced into a place where they don't want to go or where the teacher doesn't want them or where I don't think or someone else doesn't think that's the best spot for them. (~~Principal~~, April 2, p. 32)

Classroom teachers confirm that Jerry is not a dictatorial person. One teacher talking about mainstreaming said, "It certainly hasn't been forced on us. That wouldn't be Jerry's style at all." (March 27, p. 16)

Sometimes, however, Jerry's leadership style is interpreted as one of weakness. A second grade teacher described him as "a quiet, do-nothing sort of a guy. When you have a problem and need him, he's hard to find. Then he doesn't give you much backing." (April 2, p. 5) Another teacher expressed this view of Jerry;

> He's a sweet guy and he's a nice guy, but he's not an administrator. I think the problem is he's too nice a guy to be an administrator. He won't take a stand on anything. He likes to be the good guy in every situation, which is fine, but I think lots of times you don't know where you stand with him because of that. (April 2, p. 15)

Yet another said:

> He tries to play Mr. Nice Guy to the teachers and the parents. . . . He's very good about materials for us, that we have our share of materials. If we want something and he thinks it's worthwhile, he'll buy it. I think he sees it as a good school, and I think that's important to him. . . . I think any recognition that this school can have, or anybody in this school, pleases him and is important to him. (April 2, pp. 18-19)

Another staff member volunteered that "A lot of people think he is very wishy-washy and he's not very pushy. To me he's not a bad administrator. I have worked for a lot worse." (March 31, p. 12)

When asked specifically what Jerry's role was in implementing the mainstreaming program at Crestview, several teachers replied, "Nonexistent." Others made the following comments:

> I would say he goes along with it, but he hasn't been terribly involved in the placement process. He's supportive to the idea, and he helps solve problems if they come up. (March 12, p. 15)

> He hasn't done enough. It's kind of like it was set up and then left. There hasn't been any kind of evaluation of the program. (March 7, p. 9)

> Well, he really hasn't done much. (Pause) I sure hope you don't quote me on this! I've never seen him do anything. . . . When he hired me I think he did mention that there was a special ed class in the building. (March 12, p. 8)

Although the special education teacher feels Jerry could have been more active in promoting the special education program, she acknowledges that Jerry is supportive of what is being done.

> He was supportive last year, and the faculty knew that this was something he wanted to do also. So, I think that really helps. He didn't go to any of them saying "You have to do this." But they all knew it was something he wanted to try. . . . They knew that I had gotten the okay from him. I couldn't have approached them without him saying okay and having his support for me. I had the support, but I don't think I had his leadership. (April 16, pp. 23-24)

Hearing such comments about himself probably would not be surprising to Jerry. When asked what he thought the faculty's greatest criticism of him would be, he promptly replied:

> Most of them would probably feel that I am not directive enough when it comes to types of activities and things like that. I'm pretty much low key in the way that I deal with people and I do do a lot of, I hope, processing kinds of things. And probably a criticism they would have would be tending to be not as directive in terms of the types of things that they feel that they need for me to be directive in. I think I'm aware of that, and I am making an obvious choice in terms of not being directive at that point. I am trying to get them more involved and to help them make a decision. (April 2, p. 32)

The Special Education Program

> "There's a big difference this year. Before this year we were mainstreaming in name only. . . . Last year these students were totally isolated, and there were negative feelings and comments by the staff. Things are a lot better this year, but we still aren't where we could be." (Classroom Teacher, March 7, p. 10)

Five schools in the school district have been selected to house programs for students who are labelled "educable mentally retarded" (EMR). Whereas most elementary school-aged children attend the elementary school in their neighborhood, students labelled EMR are bussed from their homes to the school which has been designated to serve their age group. Crestview serves those who are 10 to 12 or 13 years old.

Although the program at Crestview has always been designated a self-contained special education class, attempts have been made to place students in regular classrooms for part of the school day.

> There has been an EMR class here for a long time--about four to six years, I guess--and we've been mainstreaming ever since it started. But not like we are now. Before the students were in the EMR class for homeroom, recess, and most everything else. . . . When we felt like a student could make it in a regular class, we put him in whatever group he was functioning in. . . . But the group would get further and further ahead of them. The child would get more and more frustrated. The teacher would get more and more frustrated. Finally the teacher would say, "I can't work with them anymore. You've got to take them back." (Principal, February 6, p. 5; April 2, p. 35)

The principal explained that this year the approach is almost the exact opposite of what had been done in the past.

> We finally realized we should be leaving them in the special class for reading and math and sending them out for the other things they can do with the other students.. So, we reversed it. We have them in homeroom, social studies, science, and resource areas with regular classes. By "resource areas" we mean art, music, library, and physical education. And we have them with [the special education teacher] for reading and math. We're not banging our heads against the wall anymore. (February 6, p. 7)

This transition in the special education program came about as a result of at least two forces. One was the special education teacher's suggestion that they think about putting the special education students in regular homerooms and "start getting into some mainstreaming." The other impetus came from a discipline committee in the school visiting neighboring programs in an attempt to discover alternative ways to handle problematic students. One of the programs visited was designed to mainstream children labelled trainable mentally retarded. "When I saw what they were doing it really was like a lightning bolt hitting me. You say, 'My god, I've been doing this all wrong all these years. This is the way to go.'" (Principal, April 2, p. 38)

The principal described how a decision was made to try a similar program with the children labelled educable mentally retarded at Crestview.

> After the visitations the discipline committee got together and at the same time Ann and I were getting together trying to formulate something. The plan really came from Ann and me. Then we tried to generate enough enthusiasm to say "Okay, yea, I'll do it" or at least not reject it. I guess that was maybe our ultimate goal--to have nobody reject it. I don't know if they lovingly accepted it or not. And that's pretty much what happened. We then met with the discipline committee to give them our ideas, and then we met as a faculty. I pretty much left it up to Ann to present it, feeling ~~again~~ administratively that it might be better coming from a teacher with the suggestion than from the principal. (April 2, pp. 38-40)

Ann explained what took place at the faculty meeting.

> I stood up and said I was looking for homerooms for the kids, that it would be for morning activities and one or two resources, and that I'd like them to be mainstreamed for social studies. I explained to them that they [special education students] weren't expected to do the work, that I would be glad to modify the lessons in any way, that basically I wanted them to be there for socialization and to try to pick up some information, but certainly they did not have to feel as though they have to teach them everything or be bothered if they didn't get it. And I asked them to come to me and either ask for a specific child or just say they'd be glad to take one of the kids. And I told them there would be absolutely no hard feelings if they didn't want one, that I understood there were some people who felt they really couldn't work with them and that was fine. (April 2, pp. 21-22)

During the next several weeks teachers came to Ann to express their interest in having a special education student during the coming school year. Although most seemed willing to give the idea a try, some had concerns about the new venture.

> Basically their concern was "Are we going to be responsible for this student learning something?" and "What if they don't learn what we're teaching?" I think they just needed some reassurance that it was just for socialization and whatever the kids could get out of it. (Special Education Teacher, April 2, p. 22)

In describing the changes in the special education program, many people emphasize a shift in the goals of the program. A classroom teacher talking about mainstreaming explained as follows:

> Four years ago a teacher started it here. It was strictly a social thing--parties, recess, things like that--no academics at all. Then she left and another teacher came in who was almost the exact opposite. The total emphasis was on academics. Then Ann came in, and I would say that she is a compromise of the two. Basically it's a social thing. If they fit in for academics, that's fine. If not, that's okay too. (March 7, p. 1)

There is widespread agreement that socialization is one of the primary goals of the program. The principal explained that regular classroom teachers are encouraged to focus in on "some of the socialization areas--social studies, lunch, resource, homeroom, those kinds of things--the types of activities where the kids are kids and it doesn't make that big a difference whether you're the brightest kid in the room or the slowest." (April 2, p. 35)

The special education teacher, who concurs with this emphasis, said this about the role of regular classroom teachers:

> What I've been trying to get them to realize is that I don't expect them to teach my kids academics. I don't expect them to lose sleep over the fact that they taught a social studies lesson on the movement of the earth and my kids have no idea what they're talking about. I don't care about that. A lot of the teachers feel that because the kids are in there, they feel obligated to teach them something. They're teaching them the skills they have to sit and be quiet and listen during that time. Whatever else they pick up is terrific. . . . Some of the teachers are so academically oriented--I hope they see that our kids need more than the academics. (April 16, p. 15)

Although some teachers continue to worry about academic achievement, most seem willing to accept socialization as a legitimate goal for the program. One teacher told me, "If you're talking about academics, it's not happening. But that's okay as long as I know what we're after." (March 7, p. 4) Another teacher said, "The way I understand it from Ann, the main purpose is socialization, and I think they're getting that. . . . It's hard if you're trying to get across academics." (March 12, pp. 5 & 8) And a fourth grade teacher had this to say:

> I would say the thing I feel best about is that Tom is a better person when he's with these kids, I mean compared to when he's in the special class. There is a definite improvement in his behavior. . . . The bad thing about it is that academically most of it is over his head. If he were in a first or second grade grade he would be able to deal with it academically. But it wouldn't make the other kids comfortable for him to be there. He's so big. I mean his size alone would make him stand out. I don't think that's the place for him. (March 12, p. 11)

This same teacher pointed out that, although academic achievement is not a primary goal, there might be benefits in that area also.

> But he's not totally out of it. He's not totally ignoring what goes on. He's trying to contribute. . . . I'm sure there are times when he must feel as frustrated as I do because a lot of it is over his head. . . . At times, though, I've been amazed. We were studying planets a while back and before it was over Tom had learned the names of all the planets. I don't know if maybe that was just something he was especially interested in or what. He has moments of sharpness, but it's hard for him to retain it. (March 12, pp. 11-12)

Most people agree that there are advantages to the current special education program. The principal feels the teachers are not as frustrated as before because the emphasis is not on academic achievement.

> That frustration is not there because they just see them pretty much as an average kid, another kid in my homeroom,and he goes to lunch and he goes to resource and ~~okay~~ I might have him for social studies or science or I might have him in some of the other skills areas if he's capable of that particular level, but generally it's when he's capable enough to be in there at that point. So, in terms of my feelings and from what I'm hearing from the classroom teachers, there's a much more positive feeling than before. Also, this way we're able to do it with everybody. Before it was only the kid who really worked hard in reading and we could finally find a group that was appropriate for him and we put that child in . . . as kind of a trial balloon. And in most cases they ultimately failed. . . . So, from our eyes, this has really been very successful. We haven't had anywhere near the amount of problems we've had in the teachers and their frustration and the kids' frustration and things like that. Plus, as I say, it's an everyday common kind of thing. (April 2, p. 35)

The principal also cites advantages for the non-handicapped students in the school.

> I see socialization in both parts. I see it on the part~~s~~ of the kids coming into the classroom, but I also see it on the part of the kids in the regular classroom accepting these kids and being

> able to work with them. So to me it's a double-edged sword in that it works in both ways. The EMR kid, I think, really gains, but, done well and done properly, I really think the kid in the average classroom gains as much if not more in terms of understanding, willingness to help, support, and that kind of thing. As well as just an acceptance that "Hey, I can work with someone who's different, even if he looks different from me." (April 2, pp. 35-36)

Teachers, also, note certain advantages. A third grade teacher commented, "They're not a marked group now. They're not all coming from one class. . . . Last year you'd see them lined up in the hall. They [other children] didn't have much to do with them." (March 28, pp. 9-10) Another teacher pointed out this:

> I think the main thing is that they really do have friends now because they're mainstreamed all day. They're not just dropping in like they used to. Like Terry--two boys in the class are her best friends. The children really like them. (March 12, p. 7)

This idea was confirmed to some extent by the special education teacher, who told me about the students' reactions on Valentine's Day.

> You should have seen them yesterday. It was great! All the homerooms had their Valentine's Day parties yesterday. I just wandered around to see what was happening. I walked into one room and Lawrence was standing in front of his desk looking down at this pile of valentines. I said, "What's the matter, Lawrence?" And he looked up at me and said, "Mrs. Cobbs, I don't know what to do. I've never had this many valentines before." My eyes started to fill up. It was so great. And I realized that he was right. They have always gotten about seven valentines from their special ed friends and that's all. I went around to all the rooms. They were all the same. They all had about 30 valentines apiece, and they were so excited. It was really great. (February 15, p. 10)

Last year the special education class was in a cluster with first and second graders, and staff members freely admit there were problems with that location. A second grade teacher in the cluster shared her perspective:

> We had some problems. There were a couple of large boys, and they kept coming over, teasing the younger kids. Finally some of them started teasing back. I was afraid it would lead to a fight. The children got scared. They didn't know how to react. . . . I decided the best thing was to not let them in the room. Actually, I was frightened too. I knew if they got obstinate that would be it. You're not going to move them. (April 2, p. 5)

Another teacher had a slightly different perspective. She said, "I think there were some problems just because they were bigger than the primary ones. It had nothing to do with being handicapped, just that they were bigger." (March 28, p. 10) The special education teacher had yet another view of the problems:

> Our kids were so out of place, towering over these other kids. Mentally they were doing some of the same things these other kids were, but I was trying to teach self-help skills and social skills and it was just so out of whack, trying to teach the kids proper behavior and them seeing all these little ones doing just the opposite. . . . First graders are still learning the rules of the school, and our kids have been in school for at least six years, maybe more. (April 2, p. 12)

This year the special education classroom is located in a cluster with two fifth grades, two fourth grades and the learning disabilities resource room. According to the special education teacher, parents of the special education students influenced the move to a more age-appropriate location. "Parents were really upset. They didn't want to come in for parties and see their kids with little ones. They really played a major role in getting our class changed to another cluster with older children." (April 2, p. 13)

Though identical in design to the other classrooms in the school, the special education classroom is arranged quite differently. Unlike other rooms, this one contains no more than two or three student desks. Instead, tables, chairs, and pillows are arranged for individual and small group work stations. There are several centers for specific activities such as cooking, listening to audio equipment, playing games, working puzzles, reading, and having discussions. Also, there are movable cabinets, screens, and partitions to insure privacy when needed.

The special education program is staffed by the certified special education teacher and a full-time teaching assistant. The assistant is in her mid-thirties, has a degree in Early Childhood Education, and has been at Crestview for three years--one year as a substitute teacher and two years in her present position. Prior to Crestview, she taught pre-school children in another state. When asked how she felt about working with special education students, she said:

> I was reluctant to do it. . . . I didn't have any special training in this, and, honestly, I was scared of the children. I had never been around kids like this. When I came along people didn't have anything to do with them. They didn't ridicule them; they just ignored them. So, I had never been around them. . . . The thing that really made the difference was Ann and her ability to explain things to me--to explain why they do the things they do. (March 28, p. 3)

The assistant does not seem to be uncomfortable now with her role.

> The main thing is to treat them as you would a normal child, to have the same goals and objectives and expectations of them as you do the others. But that's hard for people to do. You tend to feel sorry for them. I know I did at first. . . . Now I say it's easy to yell at them when you're with them six and a half hours a day. It's just like any other kid. (March 28, p. 4)

The special education teacher and the teaching assistant share classroom responsibilities and decisions to a large extent, although the teacher is considered by both to be "in charge." Usually the teacher handles reading and mathematics instruction; the teaching assistant is responsibile for current events and handwriting folders.

Both are involved in helping their students prepare homework asssignments and complete lessons given in the regular classrooms. Also, the special education teacher explained to me that if they know ~~in advance~~ what topic will be covered in a regular class, they talk about it in advance with their students. Sometimes, if a written assignment is part of the lesson, the student will come back to the special education class while the other students do the written work. Other times the student is sent to the regular class with an alternate written assignment. "For example, if they are writing about something, we might tell our student to draw pictures about it." (Special

Education Teacher, February 6, p. 24) Occasionally the teaching assistant will go into the regular class to help a special education student there.

Some activities must be modified so greatly that they are completely carried out in the special education class instead of in the regular class.

> When it comes to tests, the kids bring the test down and I read it to them. Many times I do the handwriting for them because they get so flustered doing that. And I'll always put "dictated" at the top. (Special Education Teacher, April 16, p. 17)

Other times it is just a matter of the regular class teacher being sensitized to a student's needs. For example, when Ann discovered one of her students was never called upon by a fifth grade teacher to read in class, she casually intervened to see what could be done.

> I asked her, "What do you do with the kids who are poor readers?" The teacher said, "I only have them read a few lines or I have them read the captions under the pictures." So I asked her why didn't she try that with Dorothy. Several days later she came up to me and said, "I asked Dorothy to read and she did it, and she even volunteered for some answers. I should have done that a long time ago!" (April 16, p. 16)

The Special Education Teacher

> "I was never given the opportunity as a child to be with special education students. They were always the class down in the basement that you didn't dare walk by because they might snatch you up and do something awful to you. I guess I didn't want kids growing up the same way I did, wondering what was wrong with them, wondering why that class was over in a corner. Our kids have a lot to offer." (Special Education Teacher, April 16, p. 21)

Ann Cobbs is a rather small, very attractive woman in her late bwenties. She has short brunette hair, dark brown eyes, and a lovely smooth complexion. She dresses very neatly in casual styles that complement her calm, pleasant, easy-going nature. She is soft spoken and pleasingly self-confident.

This is Ann's fifth year of teaching. For one year she taught students labelled trainable mentally retarded and emotionally distrubed in a junior high school in another state. For two years she taught primary-aged students labelled trainable mentally retarded. This is Ann's second year as a special education teacher at Crestview.

When asked to describe her own teaching style, Ann had the following to say about herself:

> I use a very quiet, I think calm, manner. I try to show the kids that I can be patient with them. I use a lot of joking and teasing with them. I try to bring them into the discussion and make them part of the lesson. I give them almost as much time to speak as I give myself. I try to start every lesson with something about the kids to draw them into it. I let them share with me before I share with them. I don't like to be the type of teacher that says, "This is what we're going to do and we're going to do it right now." I've found that tends to turn them off, and I feel it's important to make them part of what I'm trying to do with them.
>
> Also, I've found that I have been criticized at times for not getting down on the kids too much. I guess my answer to that always is that the kids get put down so much that they need at least one person that they know they can trust and that isn't going to laugh at them for some of the things that they do, isn't going to get really angry, but is going to try to understand more than get angry. And that's helped because when I do have to get angry, when I do have to raise my voice, it's like they know something must really be wrong if I'm about to do that. And that works. (April 16, pp. 17-18)

Ann's general perception of the program and its purpose seems to center on making the situation and her students as "normal" as possible. "Nobody's going to stop them on the street in ten years and ask, 'How much is 2 X 3?' They are going to see if they are walking down the street and not sticking out." (Special Education Teacher, April 16, p. 15) Consequently, Ann insists that the students take responsibility for themselves to the greatest extent possible.

> They come to us from a primary class and are used to having a lot of things done for them, like buttoning up coats and buckling boots. It's quite a surprise for them to learn--and they learn it quickly--that I'm not going to do things like that for them. . . . We tell them they have to prove to us that they can't do it before we'll help them with it. (February 6, p. 22)

On another occasion Ann reiterated the same idea. "There was a big jump from the Primary II class to my class, which is the Intermediate. The Primary II classes still have a lot of toys around, and they are still doing a lot of primary things. Then they come to me where I expect a lot of independence and really growing up." (April 2, pp. 12-13)

Also, Ann emphasizes to others in the school that the special education students should be treated just like everyone else. "If they tell the others to get out their books, ours should be expected to do the same. They should also be punished for the same things." (February 6, p. 24) Similar advice is given to students in the school:

> Anytime I do an orientation with the students, I try to show them that they should treat these students just like they do their other friends. I tell them they don't even have to be their friends. There are some children they just don't want for their friends. I understand that, and I tell them that might be the case with the ones in the class. "Just tell them, 'I don't want to be your friend.' It's okay." (February 27, p. 12)

Another part of making things as "normal" as possible, in Ann's view, is to place the students in regular classrooms so that they have appropriate role models. Her feeling is that many of the behavior problems her students have are the result of being exposed to each other too much.

> I found from looking at their records that some of the kids didn't have that many behavior problems. It was more from spending so much time with each other that they were picking up each other's bad habits. They knew what they were going to do from day to day. They had basically lived with each other for almost six years, and it was just time to separate them and let them meet new people and make new friends. (April 16, p. 21)

Ann freely admits that her students behave differently in the special education classroom than they do in the regular classrooms.

> Sometimes I feel like they have on masks and when they come back in here they take them off and say, "Whew, I can be myself now." They know they have to behave when they're there. They don't do all their weird things. Then when they come back here it's like, "Well, if I do weird things, Mrs. Cobbs is going to think I'm a little strange sometimes, but she knows I'm not really weird." (Special Education Teacher, February 6, p. 25)

Ann feels that within certain limits the differences in behavior are not only acceptable, but also "normal" under the circumstances.

> I think our kids need a place where they can get up and roam when they have to, that they can be themselves within limits which are posted in the room.... ~~And none of the rules say you must sit in your seat at all times and keep you mouth shut. That would be ridiculous.~~ I think they are smart enough to know that their behavior has to be one way in one place and another way in my room. (April 16, p. 20)

The principal concurs that these behavioral differences are okay.

> I guess there's room for that. I think we all do it. If I'm seated with a bunch of school board members I'm gonna act differently than I am if I'm seated with my buddies who are playing basketball. I just think that we all have different roles, and I think the kids do that. (April 2, p. 36)

Ann has been largely responsible for the implementation of the special education program as it presently exists and is given credit for its success by others in the school. On several occasions the principal cited Ann's influence on the program.

> She really did most of the planning and talked with the teachers and all of that. . . . She tries to get in the good graces of the teachers. She makes it clear that she will take the students back if there are problems. (February 6, pp. 5 & 7)

> Pretty much what we've done when we've gotten a new student or when there's been a problem, Ann, and it has been primarily Ann, has talked with the teacher--that this is the child, this is what I have done, this is the service that we provide, and if you need help we'll give it to you and that type of thing. She has really gotten in with the classroom teacher and has gone in and substituted if they've needed extra time or to help them in something. She's really been tremendous in terms of providing a service to the classroom teacher. She's willing to sit down with them and write the IEP's and to have them involved and to meet with the parents and things like that. So, she's really done a tremendous inservice with the staff on this kind of thing. And it has really done a great deal to make it work. (April 2, p. 39)

The principal summarized his feelings about Ann's contributions by saying, "I'm very pleased with what I see happening. I lay an awful lot of that on Ann's shoulders. She's just done an excellent job working with the parents, working with the kids, and working with the staff." (April 2, p. 49)

Teachers share the perception that Ann is the one who makes the program work. A fourth grade teacher commented, "Ann has been the originator of most of it. I would say she's been the main cog in the wheel. . . . She did most of the selling." (March 12, p. 15) When asked how the program began, another teacher said, "I guess it was Ann's idea mostly. She probably knew the kids could be mainstreamed more, and she talked to us about doing it." (March 27, p. 16) Another teacher commented, "Their teacher is very nice. She's understanding and cooperative. She has worked hard with them." (March 4, p. 8) And still another staff member had this to say: "I had never worked with anyone that was as knowledgeable about what they were doing as Ann. And I don't mean just giving a name for things, but really explaining why." (March 28, pp. 3-4)

Parents, too, seem to share a high regard for Ann. Although no parents were interviewed, a review of student records revealed notes addressed to Ann from some of the parents. Some dealt with routine matters; others, however, were notes specifically thanking Ann for things she had done with the students. For example, one note read: "Dear Mrs. Cobbs, Joe did read to me, and I'm so happy. I could hardly believe it. You are a miracle worker! ☺ Thank you!" (April 1, p. 11)

Ann voices a somewhat different perception of how others see her. For example, she is frustrated at times because she feels she does not get positive feedback from the principal.

> There are times when I think any of us would like a pat on the back and have him say, "That was a really nice lesson" or "You're doing a good job." . . . I guess for me I have to assume that I am because I haven't heard otherwise, but there are times when I do need for him to say something. . . . You always need to know that you're okay. (April 2, pp. 17-18)

When asked how she thinks other teachers see her, Ann had this to say:

> I think they see me as being admirable and that somebody has to do it and we're glad that you're the one. I don't think a lot of them realized up until this year that I was doing a lot of the same things they were doing . . . but that I was just introducing it differently, that I had kids that I had to do individual work with, and that I couldn't group anyone together. . . . I had a teacher last year who thought I just had play time. (April 16, pp. 11 & 13)

Ann also voices some concern because "sometimes I feel guilty about not doing my job. They're in regular classrooms a lot, and I feel like sometimes I don't do enough." (February 16, p. 24) This concern arises again when Ann talks about plans for next year.

> I'm a bit more nervous this year about what's going to happen next year than I ever was last year. Last year they [classroom teachers] really didn't know what to expect. I feel that I didn't know what to expect this year either, and I think part of me was very lax in what I could have done this year. I'm almost afraid to ask if they'll take them back next year because I feel that they know I didn't do enough this year. (April 2, p. 23)

Ann has mixed feelings about being seen as the main instigator of the program and, at times, wishes she could share the spotlight with others, especially the principal.

> I guess basically I want to save my own backside. If it didn't work it would be me that they would look at. I wanted someone--almost like a partner in crime--I wanted an accomplice--to know that if I had problems, I could go to them too and that everything wouldn't be on my shoulders. I didn't want that responsibility. I wanted him [the principal] to take some of that responsibility, that if it didn't work we would both be in hot water. (April 16, p. 24)

On the other hand, Ann recognizes that she plays an important role in the program's success.

> I find myself, I think unlike any other staff member, really having to watch what I say to people because I have to deal with a lot more faculty people than others are. They just have to worry about their team members and that's it, whereas I have kids scattered among several teams. I really have to watch my step. (April 2, p. 16)

In talking about things that make a mainstreaming program more likely to succeed, Ann reveals more about how she perceives her role as a special education teacher.

> Also, I think it would depend on me, not just for the kids, but the faculty would depend on the special education teacher. It would depend on how she felt about her kids and probably what type of relationship she had with the rest of the faculty. . . . I guess my recommendation to anyone that wanted to try it would be to spend a good solid year getting to know your faculty and

> really making an effort to see how you can help them for a year--really playing PR. You know, asking if you can come in sometimes, bringing one of your kids with you, talking to them, sharing the funny things that your kids are doing or some of the activities that you have planned for them to prepare them that "I do all of the same things that you do." I think definitely a good solid year of something like that before springing it on them. (April 16, p. 23)

Ann seems to play the public relations role well. She not only seems to recognize the importance of the classroom teachers' role in mainstreaming, but looks for opportunities to tell them how important their involvement is to the success of the program. During my second visit to the school, Ann told me that she had talked to the teachers about why I was coming to the school.

> All I told them really was that we had been chosen for a mainstreaming project. I used a little PR. I told them it was because they had done such a good job that we were chosen to be in a study. And it's true. I told them if they weren't doing such a good job with these kids we wouldn't have such a good program. (February 13, p. 16)

The Special Education Students

There are twelve students in Ann's program, seven girls and five boys. They range in age from 11 to 13. Three are Black; nine are White. Seven of the students are quite normal in physical appearance; two have Down's syndrome characteristics; one has cerebral palsy. Two others have physical quirks and features that would set them apart but are not characteristic of any particular syndrome or illness.

These children are thought to have more serious disabilities than former students who were at Crestview. Ann explained that many of her students were new to the school last year.

> It was quite an adjustment for the people here. They were used to a group of very high functioning EMR's. These students are labelled EMR by the Committee on the Handicapped . . . because they can benefit from this program, but if you look at their IQ scores you'll see they are probably all in the TMR range. (February 6, p. 23)

Ann's remarks are supported by others in the school. One teacher, when asked about differences in special education students in the school during the last several years, reported, "I think these children now are much lower." (March 7, p. 6) Another explained as follows:

> Two years ago the children were not as severe. I mean, they were slower than the rest, but I didn't even realize they were being mainstreamed, or however you say it. Then last year they were--I don't know how to say it--more retarded, I guess you'd say. (March 12, p. 6)

The students are assigned to eleven different homerooms in four of the six clusters in the school. All of them have lunch, art, music, physical education, and library with their homeroom groups; some have social studies. They also spend 30 to 45 minutes at the end of the day in homerooms. Four of the students receive speech therapy three to five times a week for half hour sessions; one student is involved in physical therapy once a week with a therapist from the Cerebral Palsy Center. Most of the 12 students come to Ann in the mornings for reading instruction and in the afternoons for mathematics, language, or fun activities. However, Ann speaks of her two "exceptions." One is a student who, according to Ann, is "99% mainstreamed." He is in a regular class except when he goes swimming with Ann's class once a week at the high school pool. "Of course, he's in the third grade, and he's eleven years old, but he's there full time and is doing fine." (Special Education Teacher, February 6, p. 23) The other exception is a student who, though in a special education class full time last year, is now in a fourth grade class for everything except reading and some fun activities, including swimming.

There is one "exception" that Ann did not speak of as explicitly. This is a student who spends a minimal amount of time in the regular classroom even though he is considered quite "normal" in many ways.

> Craig has lots of friends. He came in new this year and was put right into a homeroom, and I don't think the children realize he's any different. He doesn't look that different from the others, and he doesn't act any different. (Special Education Teacher, February 13, p. 10)

Later I learned that Craig is eleven years old, is in a second grade homeroom, and has enuresis. For reasons that were not altogether clear, it also became obvious that his involvement in the regular classroom was almost nonexistant. His homeroom teacher describes his participation in her classroom as follows:

> Craig is here, but he doesn't really take part. He's not involved in any academics. His bus is usually late. It's usually about 9:05 before he arrives. We usually take attendance right at 9:00. He hangs up his coat and goes to Ann. He's back for lunch at 11:30 until about 12:00. He does paperwork that Ann sends for him from 12:30 to 1:00. That's a silent reading period for the class. . . . At 1:00 he goes back to Ann for math. He stays there until dismissal, which is usually about 3:15 or 3:20. . . .
>
> He loves to talk, especially at the end of the day. That's his time. He loves it. He spends five or ten minutes just talking to us. The others have usually gone and it's just the three of us here. I feel that's about all we can give him--the time, the contact, and the conversation. (April 2, pp. 1-2)

Tolerated and [illegible] [illegible]

When asked about Craig's limited involvement in the regular classroom, Ann explained:

> He is there solely for socialization. He was never with normal children until this year. He was in the Primary II class, self-contained, for the entire day. So, we placed him there so he could have some role models, and he'd be able to learn social language skills, learn how to sit within a large group. We didn't expect him to learn any of the concepts and skills this year. (April 16, p. 6)

The special education students seem to be well accepted by all but a very few adults in the school. Having them participate "in the mainstream" fits with the principal's philosophy.

> Because I believe in heterogeneous grouping and that kind of thing, I think of it [mainstreaming] as the kind of thing we have been doing in this building for a long period of time. I just think that it's good. I see it as all being positive. I really don't see a lot of negative things with it. (April 2, p. 33)

A teacher expressed the comments of several others by saying

> Really they do fine. I just shove them into a group with the others. They'll usually help them if they need it. Or, if they're really slow, I'll wait until the others are working, then I'll help them. (March 4, p. 10)

Another teacher also seems to have little difficulty accomodating the special education students in her classes.

> His problem is that he has a short attention span. You may have noticed. But I can't stop the whole class just to help him. So, I give the directions to the whole class, just like a normal class. Then I might say, "Tony, you go sit with one of your friends" or "So and So, why don't you sit with Tony today?" Then, if he's missed certain things, I know they'll help him. There are three or four that just love to work with him. (February 29, p. 10)

Even the custodian, who knows all of the special education students by name, agrees, "They don't cause no trouble. Let's see, there's a teacher and a couple of aides, I think--a little more staff. . . . They do fine. They don't cause nobody no trouble." (February 26, pp. 10-11)

However, I was told, "There are definitely teachers who don't want them in their classes. Some are really uptight about it." (Teacher, March 12, p. 8) The special education teacher simply refuses to place a student with such a teacher. "I would never put a child with her. She doesn't have to tell the children she doesn't like them. They know it." (February 27, p. 10)

Even some of the teachers who have agreed to work with the special education students have certain reservations.

> Some days I feel like she shouldn't be here. There are some days she has no idea what's going on in class. Somebody could be there to help her, but I'm not comfortable with the idea of an aide with her in class. I don't think that's good. It sets her off from the others. (March 7, p. 1)

The same teacher added later in the conversation, "It's hard for me too. I've tried to involve her, and a lot of times it seems more like putting her on the spot than helping her." (March 7, p. 3)

The teachers have reservations for differing reasons. Sometimes the reluctance to deal with a special education student~~s~~ relates simply to the student's appearance. One teacher said of a Down's syndrome child, "I simply cannot stand to look at a kid like that all day long." Other times the reluctance relates to perceptions of disability labels. One teacher told me, "Some [teachers] don't want it [mainstreaming]. I feel that way about the physically handicapped. I don't feel it's my job to push a wheelchair or change diapers." (April 2, p. 6) Another teacher put it this way: "I don't know what his label is or anything like that, but if he were emotionally disturbed or something like that I think it might make more of a difference." ~~I think I'd have to pay more attention.~~ (March 27, p. 7)

Most often the determining variable in a teacher's acceptance of a student is the child's behavior. If a student presents no behavior problems, he or she is generally accepted by the regular class teacher as being okay. For example, a second grade teacher said, "We're lucky. We got a very quiet boy, gentle in every way. There are some in Ann's room that I'm not sure I'd take. They're very aggressive and they're big kids." (April 2, p. 4) One of the fourth grade teachers had this to say:

> Compared to when he's in the special class, there is a definite improvement in his behavior. . . . Normally I'd say that if a kid was in a situation where most of what was going on was over his head he would begin to be a real behavior problem. That doesn't seem to be the case with him. (March 12, pp. 11-12)

Behavioral expectations of the students are made explicit to the students as well as others. One teacher explained to me

> There are no problems in the room. She doesn't carry on like she does in the special ed class. She knows that when she comes into my room she has to control herself, and I think it's good for her. She knows that we don't behave that way in our room. The others don't scream and carry on and she can't either. She knows that in order to stay in the room she has to be in control and she does it. (March 7, p. 3)

Having the same behavioral standards for the special education students as for the rest of the class seems to enhance acceptance by regular students. When asked how other students feel about the special education students, one teacher had this to say:

> They don't seem to treat him any different really. They see that there's no unfair favoritism, that I expect the same of Lawrence as I do of them. Like with homework--I demand that Lawrence do homework just like the others. I know he can't do it, but I expect him to take it home just like they do and get somebody who can do it to work with him. The children see this and they take him more seriously. (March 27, pp. 5-6)

Another teacher voiced the same idea.

> Sometimes I don't think they [regular students] take us seriously enough when we say, "Treat them normally." . . . I think it helps them to see us treating her the way we do. Like in class yesterday, Betty had her head down on the desk during the lesson. I said, "Betty, are you sick?" She said no. So, I said, "Well, sit up then. You're not going to lie down in class." The other children hear this and realize they can treat her normally. (March 7, p. 7)

In spite of what teachers do to encourage "normal treatment" of special education students, other students interact with their special education peers in a variety of ways. There have been a few incidents of malicious namecalling. Three people mentioned an incident which occurred last year in which a student yelled at one of the students in front of the rest of her homeroom, "My mother says she shouldn't even be in this school. She's retarded! She doesn't belong here!" The special education teacher also related stories about several children being called "retards." She described to me how she handles such situations.

> Anytime I see something going on I try to talk to the students involved. I try to talk about what mental retardation is. I tell them that I know they talk about "retards" on the playground or wherever, and I try to get them to start talking about what they mean by it. They don't really use the word like we use it. They use it in the same way they would say "You're a fool" or "You're crazy." I try to talk to them about what it really means and what causes it, things like that. (February 27, p. 12)

The principal had this to say about name-calling:

> I get upset with names like "fatso" or "skinny" or anything else ~~with kids doing that~~ because that can really hurt somebody. So, I really get upset when they do that with those [special education] kids. I think the teachers do too. I guess that if the teachers are overprotective they are probably over protective in that way. . . . When this situation comes up with a handicapped child, I think there is a tendency to--I won't say over-react, but not to react in the same way [as with a non-handicapped child]. If "retard" or "retarded" or something comes up, my reaction is to react more severely than if someone came up and said, "He called me an SOB" or "He called me something else." (April 2, p. 42)

Sometimes the special education students are teased or ridiculed. One teacher related, "We asked the kids what happens when we're not around, when they're in the lunchroom and places like that, and they admitted they make fun of them sometimes." (Teacher, March 7, p. 7) Another teacher does not consider incidents of ridicule to be frequent or serious. "They made fun of them at first, but the kids get to know them and then it's okay." (Teacher, March 12, p. 8) Another teacher had this explanation for what might appear to be ridicule:

> Sometimes they do laugh at him, but I don't think they mean it in a belittling way. Sometimes the things he says are just funny. And he is quite a showman. He's an entertainer and loves to show off. He doesn't get to shine in many things, so he shines in his humor and his personality. (Teacher, March 12, p. 14)

Some of the students have expressed curiosity or pity for the special education students.

> Some of the children ask questions. They want to know why Diane and Terry look so strange. Mostly I try to get them to see that these students are like them in many ways and that they should be treated the same as their other friends in the class. I don't think they mean to be malicious. I really think they are afraid of being hurt, or that they'll upset them. . . . They feel like they should be kind to them. (Special Ed. Teacher, February 27, p. 12)

Another teacher explained things this way:

> "The kids really try to include her in it [a toss game], but the thing is she never catches it. So, most of the time she ends up by herself. I think a lot of the kids genuinely feel sorry for her. They make an honest attempt to involve her, but it's hard. (March 7, p. 3)

Another teacher explained a student's reaction to a special education student being removed from the cafeteria because he was having a temper tantrum.

> She felt sorry for him and felt, I guess, that he should be able to break the rules and get away with it. She thought the teachers were being mean to him. She didn't realize they were trying to just get him out of there as quickly as possible. (March 12, p. 9)

Many teachers mentioned students' attempts to help their special education classmates. Sometimes this was viewed as a positive practice; other times it was seen as too much of a good thing.

> I've noticed, especially in fourth and fifth grade when things get more difficult, if one's having trouble another will help in a very kind way. What is the word? Empathetic, maybe? They're not saying, "Look at me. I'm helping someone," but just quietly helping an a very positive way. (Teacher, March 4, p. 9)

> They realize he doesn't have the same ability as they do, and they try to help him. Sometimes they help him too much and do things he should be doing himself. (Teacher, March 12, p. 14)

Judging the merit of such help is often based on whether or not "mothering" is involved.

> Last year some bad things were going on. There was lots of mother henning. Two girls, especially, were mother henning one little girl. Finally they stopped it. It's not so bad this year. (Teacher, March 4, p. 9)

> And some of these children are amazingly perceptive with the special ed kids. They seem to pick up on their needs. A little girl in my room worked a lot with Ann's class, and not in a mothering way. (Teacher, March 7, p. 8)

> The more time she [another student] spends with Betty, the worse it gets. She tries to mother her a lot, as you can see. (Teacher, April 1, p. 8)

At least two of the special education students seem to be completely accepted by their peers. These happen to be the "two exceptions" Ann mentioned and are the students who are most fully integrated into regular classes. The regular classroom teacher described one student's interactions with the rest of the class this way:

I didn't consider her EMR from the beginning. The other children didn't either. Sometimes they might have asked why she was leaving the room. I would say she's going out for a reading lesson. Lots of children do go in and out, so it's not all that noticeable. She's not exactly a class leader, but she's popular. She's got lots of friends. The children like her. (Teacher, April 2, pp. 8-9)

CHAPTER 11

Lucky to Survive: Resource Program in an Upper Middle Class Suburb

Susanne Fitzgerald

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this case study is to explore the integration of thirteen high school students labeled learning disabled into the mainstream of a public high school. Thirteen observations were conducted in the resource room and in the classrooms into which the students were mainstreamed. Interviews were conducted with the resource room teacher, the principal, six regular class teachers and four students in the resource program.

Administration and staff in the school were extremely cooperative. All of the teachers who were approached were willing to be interviewed and to have the observer in their classrooms.

The resource room teacher was due to enter the hospital for surgery shortly after observations had begun. He asked that further observations be postponed until after he had returned to the classroom, sometime around the end of March. He seemed concerned that the presence of an observer would place an additional burden on the teacher assistant, Joanne, assigned to the program, who would be substituting for him during his absence.

Joanne did not think that the presence of an observer would create additional difficulties for her. However, she thought that the observer would be unable to get a true picture of the classroom because of observer effect.

An initial interview with the principal and with the resource room teacher and teacher assistant were conducted early in February. Observations in the resource room and regular classrooms were conducted beginning early in April. The students seemed to accept the presence of an observer in their room quickly. They often discussed personal details of their life in the observer's presence and in the presence of other students in the room.

THE SCHOOL

Physical

The program was located in the high school of an affluent suburban centralized school district outside of Central City. The high school serves grades 9 through 12 and has an enrollment of approximately 1500.

Classes are housed in two buildings connected by an enclosed overhead walkway. The newer building was originally built to be the high school and the older building was a middle school until the construction of a new middle school made that building obsolete. Each building consists of two floors and has a gymnasium, kitchen and cafeteria. The main offices for the administration are housed in the newer building, called House I.

The newer building is very attractive, with dark wood paneling on the bottom third of the walls and the upper portion of the walls painted a muted color. Floors are an attractive gray tile. A carpeted ramp leads from one level to another. The second building is noticeably older and more utilitarian in appearance. The bottom half of the walls are yellow ceramic tile and the top half of the walls are painted a dull yellow. Floors are brown tile. Both buildings are well maintained and are in good repair.

Neighborhood

The centralized school district serves an area that includes two villages, located about five miles from each other. The high school is situated one half mile outside one of the villages, surrounded by wide expanses of land and wooded areas. Across the street from the school is a developed tract of houses, carefully landscaped and in excellent repair.

The village is a pleasant small community, filled with small stores, some of which are deteriorating while others have the look of small speciality or antique shops. In the center of the village, the old railroad depot has been renovated and now houses several business offices. A fast food restaurant is prominent on one corner. The village contains many well maintained homes and apartment complexes.

Teachers

There are approximately ninety five teachers employed at the high school, with a female to male ratio of 60% to 40%. Of the ninety five, ten at the most are non-tenured. Teachers average twelve years experience in that district.

Prior to any observations in regular classrooms, both the principal and the resource room teacher had stressed to the researcher that a great variety of teaching styles, from very structured to very loose, would be seen among the teachers. Jack Brennan, the resource teacher, mentioned that whatever the style, all the teachers in the school were very good teachers.

> "Well, you do see a lot of different teaching styles out here, but everybody who is out here is a really good teacher. We don't have any duds. Couldn't get away with it out here in a system like this. The parents wouldn't stand for it."

All of the teachers observed seem genuinely concerned that the students assigned to them master the required material. They are responsive to student questions, they are available for before class and after class assistance, and they prepare lengthy study guides to aid students in their preparation for tests.

Classroom atmosphere ranges from formal, quickly paced and businesslike to very casual. But in all situations limits are clearly communicated to the students.

Joel, one of the students in the resource program, is mainstreamed into an English class which is currently studying the literature of science fiction. The teacher, Bill Smith, has assigned Professions by Issac Asimov for in-class reading.

> Some students are reading. Some are talking quietly. A girl in the back of the room has taken off her shoes. Barefoot, she pads up to the front of the room to talk to Mr. Smith.
>
> Two of the boys have finished reading, or at least have stopped reading and have moved over to talk with the boy sitting behind me. Although I cannot hear everything that they are saying, certain words come out, like "your friend the retard". Bill quiets them.
>
> He asks them if they've done all their work. They reply that they have. Several of them ask him for a pass to go to the library or to social studies. He tells them that they may not have a pass today. They continue talking.
>
> Joel is reading the story and occasionally taking some notes. The boys behind me become very loud again. I do not catch what one of them says, but apparently it was inappropriate language, because Bill looks up and speaks in an annoyed tone of voice: "Hey guys, watch your language!"

They quiet down. The period is almost over.

Special Distinctions

School personnel exhibit a high degree of pride in the level and quality of instruction that they provide and compare themselves favorably with other high schools.

> Linda Anderson is discussing one of the students mainstreamed into her math class.
>
> "According to the transcripts from the schools that he came from, he had the prerequisites. But the courses that he had just aren't of the academic calibre we have at this school. He went to two different private schools. The first one that he went to, two years ago, was a school that specialized in working with students with learning problems. They said that he had an algebra course there. The second school that he went to was advertised to his parents as being some sort of tutorial school, but it wasn't specifically for students with learning problems. I guess Peter really had a tough year there. His parents had sunk all the money into tuition, so he stayed for the year, then they brought him here. His transcripts said that he had geometry there, but it certainly wasn't of the calibre that our students had."

The level of academic excellence is reflected in the number and amount of scholarships received by students from the school.

> The principal, Bob Stevens, and a second man are discussing plans for the graduation ceremony. The man says:
>
> "We have an exceptionally large number of scholarships awarded this year, and they are all important ones. We'll have to announce them all."

The art teachers are praised by Bob Stevens for the number of scholarships that their students are receiving this year.

> Bob Stevens says:
>
> "They've had five students win scholarships for next year. Between those five students there is a total of over $137,000 over a four year period. In some schools, art is just used as a place to put students who can't make it elsewhere, but it isn't that way here."

Teachers see students as generally more self assured and confident than students coming from other districts. A period of adjustment may be necessary for a new student to fit in the school academic and social scene.

Matt Henry, a general science teacher of the lowest tract science class says:

> "I've got a couple of other students that really shouldn't be in here. Now, that boy over there by the window. He's really smarter than a lot of the kids in this class. He transferred in from another district and he didn't have the Greenwood sophistication, so they put him in here."

Student Population

At the end of the 1979-80 school year, the enrollment of the high school was 1490 students. Per capita expenditure for the year was $3,200.00.

THE CLASS

Location

The resource room is located on the first level of the older building, called House II. Figure 1 is a schematic drawing of the school, indicating the placement of the room.

History

The program has been in operation for two years. School personnel believe that their program is unique, and that they were one of the first districts in the area to begin a resource program for adolescents labeled learning disabled.

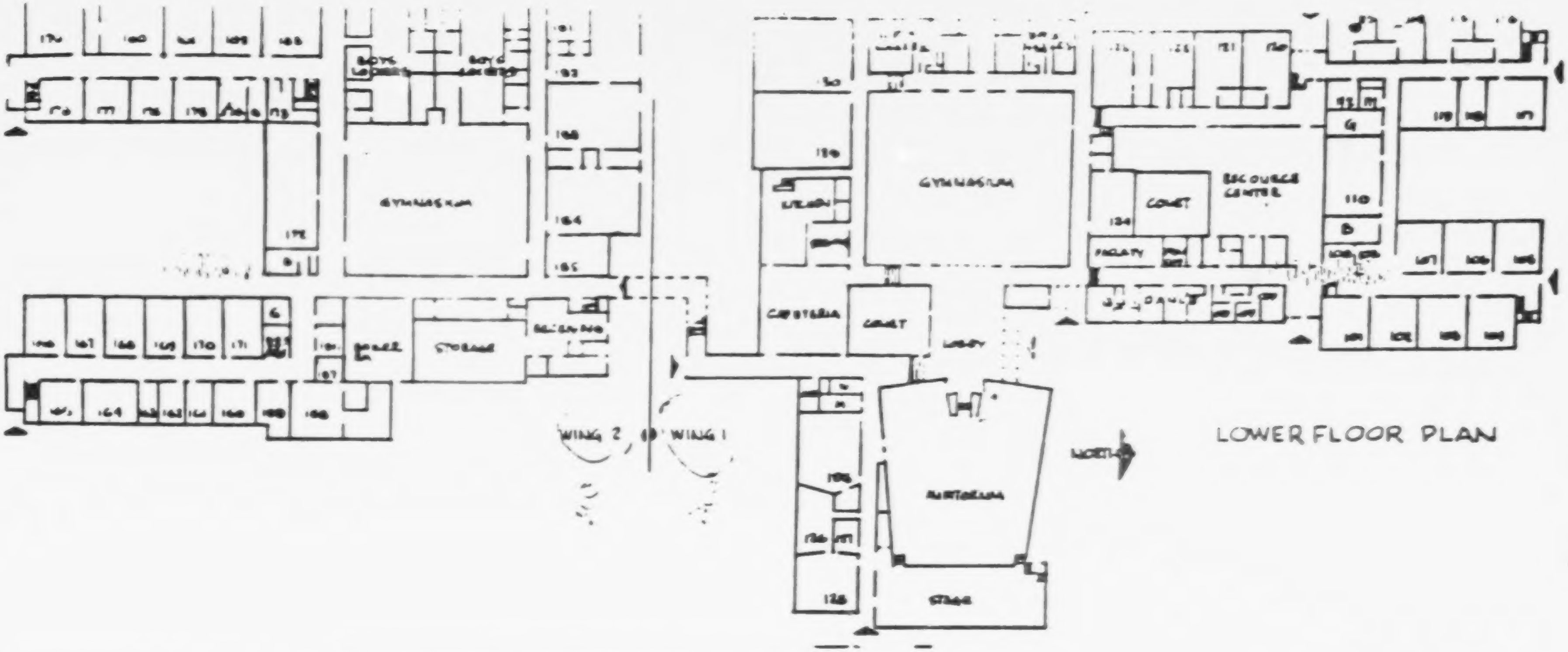
As Jack Brennan explained:

> "There really haven't been many resource rooms at the high school level. I think a few other local districts have started one, but, in fact, when we were setting up this program, we went down to a place just outside Philadelphia. We went to see Libby Goodman, who is one of the big guns in this area in working with adolescents. You know, some people think it's all the same, working with young kids or with adolescents. I don't think so. I think you need to think specifically about working with adolescents."

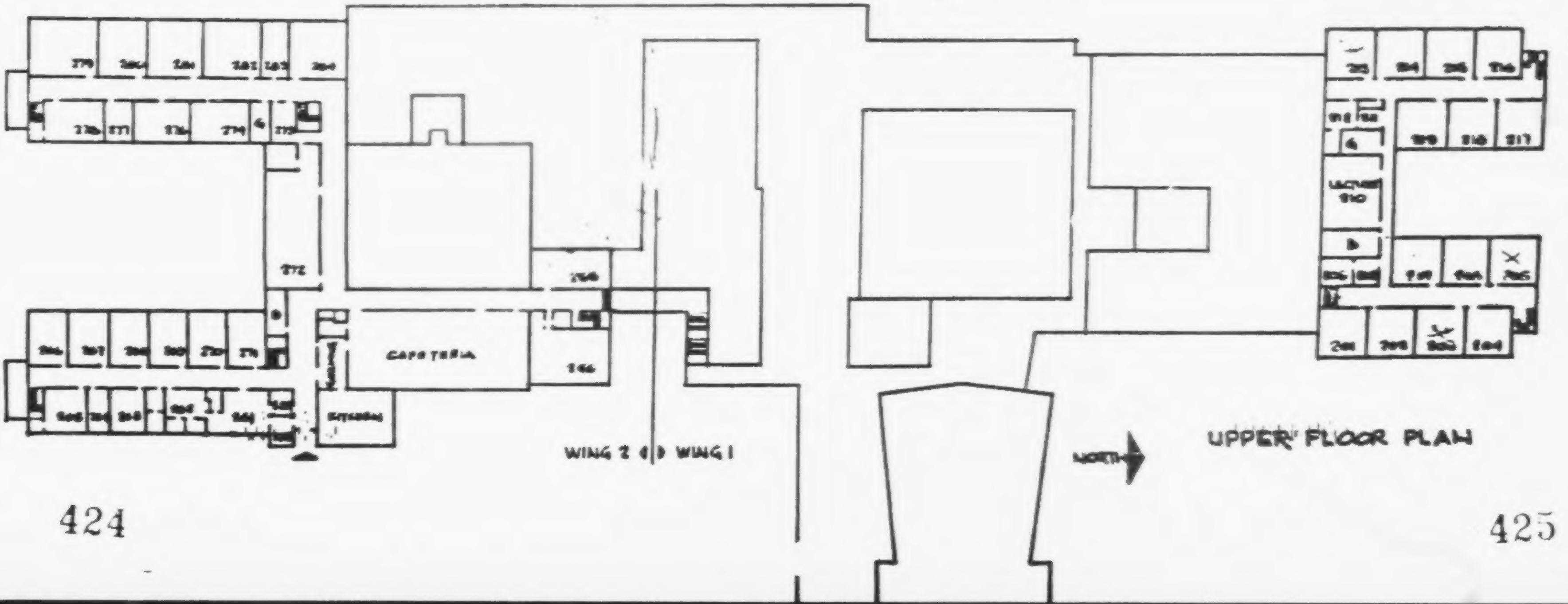
Prior to the initiation of the learning disabilities resource room, students were either served in self-contained classes or had not been formally identified as learning disabled. Most of the students in the class now have come into it from the middle schools.

Physical Description of Class

The room is a standard size classroom, but the furniture arrangement is not typical. Just inside the door are two teacher style desks with padded swivel chairs. In the back of the room are two round tables. There are six desks in the room, arranged in groups of two. In the front of the room is an oblong table with several chairs around it, a metal cupboard, and a file cabinet. Windows along one wall look out on a grassy area with young trees growing in a row parallel to the building. Along the back wall are shelves with bookcases and periodical racks underneath. The shelves contain learning materials and the bookcases hold


BOYS LOCKERS
BOYS LOCKERS
GYMNASIUM
GYMNASIUM
RESOURCE CENTER
FACULTY
STORAGE
CAFETERIA
KITCHEN
LOBBY
AUDITORIUM
STAGE
WING 2
WING 1
NORTH

LOWER FLOOR PLAN


CAFETERIA
KITCHEN
LECTURE
WING 2
WING 1
NORTH

UPPER FLOOR PLAN

room copies of the textbooks used by students in the resource room. The periodicals on the racks deal with smoking, drugs, alcohol, study habits, early marriage, and the development of self concept.

A blackboard covers most of the front wall. There is a small bulletin board at the end of the blackboard. On the bulletin board are posted the daily schedule, various school notices, and a poster which states: "The greatest kindness we can offer each other is the truth." The scene depicts a boy and girl standing next to each other in a field in the moonlight.

On the side wall is another poster which shows a person standing on a hill, gazing off into the distance. The colors of the poster are yellow and white, to indicate that the sun is shining brightly and covering everything with sunlight. The caption is: "You see things as they are; and you ask 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I ask 'Why not?'."

Three more posters are hanging on the back wall. The first depicts railroad tracks in the twilight and a train approaching in the distance with the headlight shining. The caption reads: "Life is a journey, Not a destination." The second shows a dark blue sky, the moon, and the dark, bare branches of a tree. The caption is: "Happy are they who dream dreams and are ready to pay the price to make them come true." The third poster depicts a child on the beach, holding a candle, at twilight. The caption reads: "There are two ways of spreading light; To be the candle or the mirror that reflects it."

Figure 2 is a schematic drawing of the resource room.

Organization

The program for students with learning disabilities is a resource room model. All of the students have been diagnosed as learning disabled by school psychologists in the district. They have been so labeled by the District Committee on the Handicapped; placement in the learning disability resource program was recommended and approved. Staff in the resource room are the teacher, Jack Brennan,

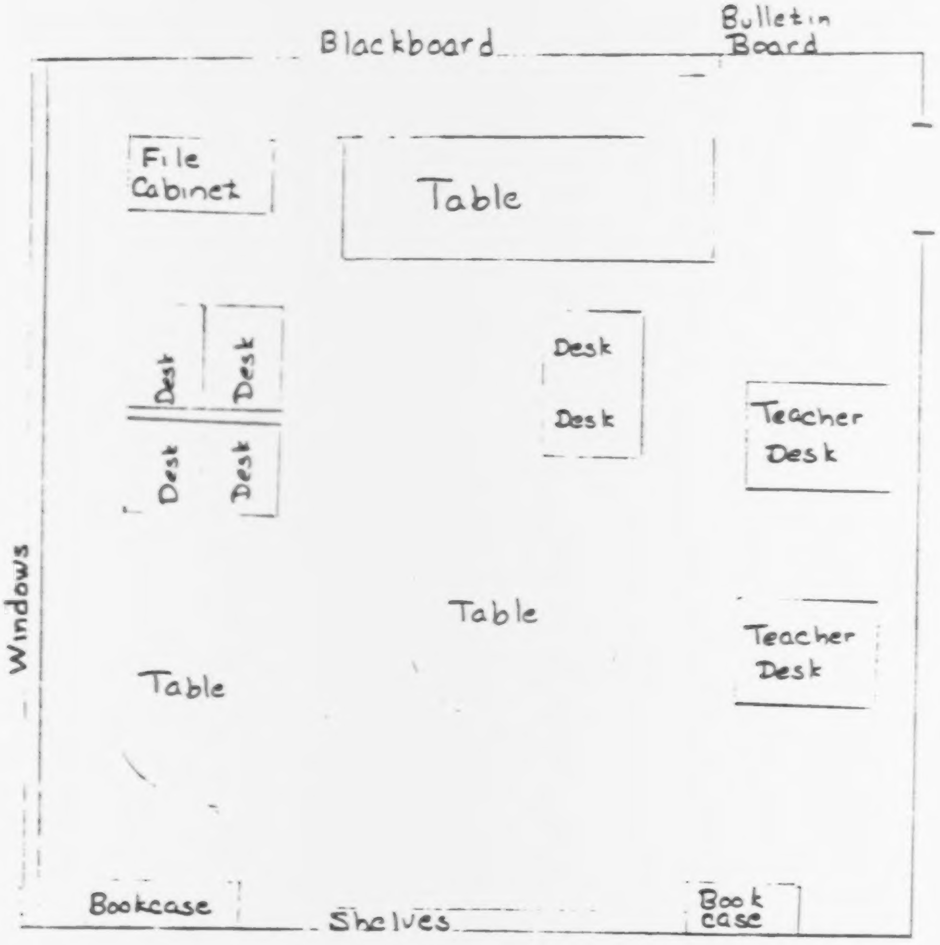

Blackboard
Bulletin Board
File Cabinet
Table
Desk
Desk
Desk
Desk
Desk
Desk
Teacher Desk
Windows
Table
Teacher Desk
Table
Bookcase
Shelves
Book case

Figure 2

and the full time teacher assistant, Mrs. Joanne Burns.

Students are in the room one or two periods a day, as specified by their IEP. The remainder of the day is spent in regular high school classes or remedial classes of which the difficulty level is determined by the student's ability.

The forty weeks of the school year are divided into four ten week periods. Some courses run for the entire forty weeks, while others, such as English, run for ten weeks. Therefore, a student could have as many as four English teachers in one year.

The day consists of eitht instructional periods, and a ninth period, during which teachers are available to provide individual assistance to students. Buses leave at 2:10, at the close of the eighth period, but students have the option of staying for the ninth period.

Class Periods:

First Period	8:05 - 8:45
Second Period	8:50 - 9:30
Third Period	9:35 - 10:15
Fourth Period	10:20 - 11:00
Fifth Period	11:05 - 11:45
Sixth Period	11:50 - 12:30
Seventh Period	12:35 - 1:15
Eighth Period	1:20 - 2:00

Some students in the resource program receive only minimal assistance, attending only the even days of the week, one period of the day. The odd days of the week they may be in remedial reading, instrumental music, chorus, or physical education.

The resource room teacher, Jack Brennan, and the guidance office are responsible for the scheduling of each of the thirteen students classes. Students are carefully matched with teachers, to coordinate a learning style with a teaching style.

Jack Brennan explains:

> "We spend a lot of time here, too, just trying to match up kids with teaching styles. Tom Gross, that's the guidance counselor, and I sit down over the summer when we know who's assigned to what, and try to match the kids with the teachers that we think they'll get along with. Research is pretty open on this. Everybody knows that there are different styles of teaching and different styles of learning, but research hasn't seemed to show that matching them up helps someone to learn better. But I think everyone would agree that it does. Research just hasn't asked the right questions. Now, take Rick Jones, for instance, there's a boy who, if he's with a teacher he doesn't like, he just won't work. So it's really important to be able to match up the kid with the teacher, especially in his instance."

Each regular classroom teacher who has a student from the learning disabilities resource program in their class is provided with a folder. They are asked to put extra copies of assignments, study guides or handouts into that folder. Jack Brennan and Joanne Burns check the folder daily to remain current of each student's work load. Regular face-to-face contact is also maintained with each teacher.

> Jack describes how he and Joanne record their teacher contact. Jack pulled a chart showing the names of about thirty teachers listed on graph paper. Several columns were drawn after each teacher's name. In one column were initials and the other columns were headed by days of the week. In the little boxes were check marks and small c's.

> "This is the toughest part of the whole program, trying to keep track of thirty teachers. The initials stand for the student in that particular teacher's room. When a teacher agrees to take a student we give the teacher a folder with a sheet in it which describes the program, and every time they give the student an assignment, we ask them to put a copy in the folder. Then we can just go in and check the folder. A check mark in the box means that we checked the folder and a 'c' means that we talked with the teacher. The numbers in this column indicate the teacher's free period, so that we know that if we have to see him, we may be able to catch him then. The most difficult part is trying to touch base with thirty teachers all the time. Some teachers, like in math, you really have to touch base with them every day because there's an assignment every day. Others, like social studies or science, it isn't quite so crucial."

There is a check mark after almost every teacher's name for each day. About half of the teachers also have a 'c' after their name.

When the assignment sheets are collected from the folders, Jack and Joanne bring them back to the resource room. Jack has prepared a large looseleaf binder with a divider for each student. The assignments are then filed under the appropriate student's name.

Jack explains the system further:

"We keep a record of every student's assignment from every class in here. That way when a student comes in, we can look and see if they have an assignment."

However, there is room for flexibility when needed.

Jack says:

"The program is different for every student, and we plan it around what they want to do. For instance, we may plan that a kid will work on a speech that is due next week, but if he comes in with an assignment that's due the next day and he's having trouble with it, we'll work on that. If we tried to make him do something else, he wouldn't do a very good job.

Inservice Program

Prior to the beginning of the resource program, an inservice workshop was held explaining some of the characteristics of students labeled learning disabled. Jack Brennan also provides ongoing inservice for each teacher who has a student labeled learning disabled in his/her class. Figure 3 is a copy of the sheet sent around to a teacher when a student who is learning disabled is placed in his/her class.

Jack explains his actions prior to the time that a student is placed with a particular teacher:

"Well, everything we do is very individual. I spend a lot of time talking with the teacher about the specific child that I want to put in her room. And I'll try to identify the things that will be most noticeable by a teacher, both the negative and the positive things. Whether to say that this child seems to learn very well visually, or that this child seems to have trouble when you give him something to read, or this student will participate in class or this student is very withdrawn. I try to let them know what kinds of things they can expect from the student. You know, this is a pretty high-powered environment and most of the students that come here go on to college. And probably the most important thing I do in talking with a teacher is giving that teacher permission to have difficulty with a child, letting them know that it's all right to have problems with a child, and to let them know that I'm going to be there for support and to help them work through the problems. It's a way of letting them know that the child is going to do poorly in some areas and allowing them to feel all right about that, letting them know that I'm going to work with them to try to help the child to do better."

THE RESOURCE TEACHER

Style

Jack Brennan exhibits a loose and casual style in his classroom and in his dealings with the students. He allows periods of talk among his students to punctuate their work periods. He is aware of frustrations that the students may be feeling and does not criticize them for flippant talk. Jack always remains calm and supportive of the students, rather than critical, and encourages task oriented behavior (school work) instead of forcing it.

> Jimmy, a student, and Jack are sitting at one of the round tables working on arithmetic problems, when Jimmy calls out loudly, "My pencil broke." He holds it up so all in the room can see. Jack takes it from him. "Here, use mine." He hands Jimmy his pencil. Jimmy takes the pencil and begins to write. Jimmy, "It doesn't work like mine." Jack, "They're just alike." Jimmy, "No, mine is more bendable." He flexes his pencil. Both pencils are identical. They are No. 2 yellow pencils. Jimmy seems to be doing this to delay working and also to call attention to himself. Jack, "I'll go sharpen yours." Jack takes Jimmy's pencil and sharpens it. As he walks to the sharpener, he smiles at the observer, "You didn't know this was in the job description, did you?" Jack returns with the pencil and gives it to Jimmy. Jimmy doesn't say 'thank you' and Jack doesn't request it. Jimmy remarks that his pencil is better and continues working.

Jack does not insist that students occupy a specific seat in the room. He allows them to work how and where they feel most comfortable.

> The observer and Bob Stevens are walking down the hall to the resource room for the first classroom observation. They enter the room. It is empty except for Jack Brennan and one student, Rick Jones. The student is seated at one of the teacher's desks in the swivel chair. Jack is seated beside him. The student's shoes are off and his feet are up on the desk. Bob Stevens remarks, "I thought I detected an odor coming from this room," he laughs. Jack ignores the remark.
>
> He greets the observer. "Come on in and make yourself at home. We're just working on some income tax. Sorry we don't have a coat rack, but just put your coat anywhere." Bob Stevens leaves the room. Jack and the student continue working, and ignore the presence of the observer.
>
> The period is almost over.
>
> Rick finishes up his homework and Jack leaves the desk to put some materials away. All the time that Rick has been working on his math, he has been sitting at the desk with his feet up on it. Rick calls out, "Where's the hole punch? I want to punch holes in these papers for my notebook." Jack turns from the cabinet and holds out the

three hole punch to Rick. The hole punch is one of the adjustable type, so that if the end screws come loose, the holes may not be punched where it had been originally set. Jack says, "I think it's set all right, but you'd better check it. Sometimes the end screws come loose."

Rick walks across the room and takes the hole punch from Jack and returns to sit at the second teacher desk, turning so that he is punching his papers on the desk behind him. He does not check the position of the holes before starting.

The bell rings. Rick asks, "Will you give me a pass to Social Studies?" Jack responds, "If you hurry with that, I think you can make it in time." Paul replies, "No, I think I'm going to be late. I don't really want to go." Jack, "So what else is new?" Jack walks over to sit beside Rick, who continues to grumble about Social Studies. Jack asks, "Know what's the matter with you today? I think it's the low pressure that's affecting everybody."

The door opens and another boy enters the room. He is about fifteen years of age with slender build, fair complexion, brown hair which is styled just below his ears and glasses. Jack looks up and says, "Hi, Jason." Jason responds, "Hi."

Jack picks up some more materials from the desk and goes to put it away. Jason sits down at the teacher's desk that Rick had vacated earlier. Rick is still punching holes in his paper. The two boys talk quietly.

Rick tries to fit the papers that he has punched into his notebook. He says in disgust, "I punched all these and they're not right." Jack replies, "I told you that you should check it because it might have slipped." Rick answers, "You did not." Jack changes the subject, "You'd better get going. You're going to be late." Rick answers, "You gotta give me a pass."

Although Rick seems to be baiting Jack, Jack maintains his easy-going manner. Jack chooses incidents that will become issues with his students. He does not wish to respond to everything.

The bell rings. Rick finishes with his notebook and puts the papers in it. Rick says, "Now let's see if it'll pass the scatter test." He turns his notebook upside down. No papers fall out. He laughs, and says, "See?" Then he calls to Jack, "you gonna give me a pass?" Jack replies, "Yes, this time." Jack writes Rick a pass. Rick takes the pass and puts it in his pocket. He talks a few more minutes with Jason, then heads for the door. He stops, "Where'd I put the pass?" He searches through his pockets, finds it, and goes out.

Physical Description

Jack Brennan is a white male, about forty five years of age, of average build. His face is square and his complexion ruddy. His thinning, dark hair

Students using the resource room frequently exhibit the following traits:

1. disorganized (lose materials or don't organize them effectively)
2. can't plan or pace themselves (finish assignments late, don't prepare for tests)
3. easily distracted (miss assignments given orally by the teacher)

For these reasons, we feel we need input directly from you about their assignments, the quality of their work and other helpful information.

To enable us to help the students better meet their responsibilities and function more successfully in your course, it will be helpful if you would include the information below in our "resource room" folder as the items occur or are assigned to students.

1. Handouts-worksheets, outlines, study guides (due dates)
2. Assignments-written and reading (due dates, especially for long term assignments)
3. Resource Room copy of text(s) and other reading materials assigned
4. Upcoming test dates and test results
5. Work not completed
6. Notes about attendance, tardiness, positive or negative behaviors

One of us will stop by on a regular basis (hopefully daily) to pick up any items you have placed in the "resource room" folder provided for this purpose.

Thanks for your help,

Joanne Burns
oom 10

Jack Brennan
Ex. 358

Figure 3

is streaked with gray. He is well dressed in gray slacks, a light blue shirt, a darker blue tie and a blue cardigan sweater. Jack wears this outfit regularly. The teacher assistant, Joanne Burns, is an attractive white female, slender build, with dark hair. Her dark brown slacks and beige silk overblouse are very stylish.

History as a Teacher

Jack Brennan is certified as a teacher of special education and a public school administrator. Prior to his assignment as resource teacher with the learning disabilities program, he had served as an administrator with the district.

Jack explains his change of assignment:

> "I was an administrative assistant in the Central Office and also in charge of a lot of special education programs. Then when this program came along, at the same time they were also cutting back on a lot of administrators. They were getting a lot of complaints from the taxpayers, feeling that the district was overstaffed at the administrative level, and so, my job was fazed out.
>
> "I was in a junior high EMR class and I taught that for years, then I moved into administration, and worked in the Central Office, and in a way, my background, in a sense, did me in. A lot of people didn't feel quite the same way about me losing the administrative job because it wasn't as if Brennan was being put out of a job. Here was something else that I could do. In a way, you might say that the special ed really did me in. The other principals, they couldn't go back into a classroom. They wouldn't have anything they could teach. For me, here was the program coming up and it was something I could do. And, you know, its...I really feel that I'm locked into this place. I can't leave. I have two children who'll be going to college soon. My son's in eleventh grade. He's gone all the way through his high school and doesn't want to leave, his senior year. And my wife has a job that she likes, and if we went somewhere else, there's no guarantee she would find anything. And so, you know, if it were just myself, and if there were another supervisory position opening somewhere, I might really consider it, but you can't just think about yourself. You have to think about the other people, too."

Joanne remarks, "Yes, you'd die a lonely man or woman, if you did that."

Jack replys:

> "That's right." He pauses briefly. "I don't want you to think I don't like my job. I do. It's different... I'm back in the classroom, taking a cut in salary but there are things I don't miss, too. I don't miss having to deal with the ire of the taxpayer. I don't miss having to go to meetings every night, but I don't like having

> to spend several hours each day doing this math homework so I can help the kids with it. Sometimes I feel like my life is all work and no play. I don't like that. I really enjoy the class, and I enjoy the kids. What I mind is not having the flexibility, that I'm really locked in."

Teacher's Perspective of His Role

Jack Brennan sees his role as that of a support person to the students. He is a facilitator and often an intermediary with the regular classroom teachers. Jack is willing to provide assistance to students so that they can succeed. Without his support, he wonders if they would be successful in the high school.

Jack explains:

> "We really end up doing a lot of counseling in this program. We see our room as a place where the kids can come to touch base. It's another place to hang their hat, and there are two more adults in their lives to help them with solving their problems.
>
> Sometimes a kid will be having a hassle with a teacher or another kid, so we'll help him develop some alternate strategies for dealing with the problem. We have one girl who is very social, and often we have to help her work out a problem with a girl friend or boy friend."

Although Jack and the other teachers are willing to be supportive of the students, they also require that the students make a sincere effort. Jack says:

> "That's how it is with these kids. If they try, we try to help them along and pass them, but, boy, I'd give somebody an 'F' just as soon as look at them if they don't try. Theresa, for instance, she's just a real goof-off. She does have trouble dealing with things that aren't concrete, but also, she goofs off. Now her reading, she doesn't do half of it, but if she'd just go to class and pay attention, she'd get most of it because they discuss these things in class. But she won't do that. I don't have a whole lot of patience with that."

Students are integrated into as many regular classes as each is able to handle. Jack talks about how previous experiences influence the ease with which a student can be integrated into a regular class.

> "Well, a lot of these kids have just sort of come up through the grades. A couple of them were in a self-contained program, and, of course, it's harder to integrate kids who have been in a self-contained program. They need more support."

When a student cannot handle the content taught in a regular class, the subject is taught in the resource room. Jack describes the program for Jean, one of the students in the room:

> "Jean isn't taking a regular Social Studies course right now, so we are working on a program here. We use News of the World. It has all the current events in it."

Teacher's Perspective of His Students

Jack describes the students in positive terms. He feels possessive toward them and calls them, "my kids." Jack says:

> "We've really got some nice kids here. There aren't any 'hoods.' These are just nice kids. They're all having some difficulties academically, but you know, the teachers would rather work with these kids than somebody who hasn't been identified (as having a learning disability) who is having problems but who really is an 'underachiever,' somebody who's obnoxious or just 'cutting up' in class. I've had teachers say that to me, that they'd much rather work with my kids, or in fact, they'll ask me why, say a child in my program seems to be doing so much better than another kid in their class, and why aren't I working with that kid and I have to explain what the criteria are for a child being in the resource program, and how the student is identified. And there was some misunderstanding about that in the beginning, but I've found that just by being there to listen (to the teachers), it (the meaning of the program) comes across."

Each student is seen as an individual, with a unique personality and unique academic and social problems.

While talking to the observer, Jack says:

> "You're going to see the whole gamut of kids here, with a wide variety of moods. There'll be some that will just talk your ear off and some will be very shy. Some kids will be very moody, and others will be very outgoing. Some are very social.
>
> David, here, is taking a lot of regular subjects. He's taking geometry, which is a pretty high powered subject and biology. He's in remedial reading even days and in the resource room odd days. No, actually, he's not in the remedial reading any more. He passed the Regents Competency Test so he doesn't have to go any more. He has a verbal IQ of 130. He's very bright and participates a lot in class; he just has difficulty with independent reading. Jason is very different. He came to us from a self-contained program near Rochester, and he spends a lot of his time in the room with us. He is in a science, which, while it isn't Regents, still is a pretty high powered course. He won't pass it, but he is learning from it, and that's what's important. He'll take another course next year.

> He's also in general math, which is what the math students take to get them ready for the competency test. He has a lot of difficulty, but he's a nice kid. Everyone likes him. This will give you an idea of the range of kids we have in this room. It's sort of a microcosm. You'll see the whole range of kids."

Jack Brennan believes that this particular high school that his students attend is unique, and that the students face considerable pressure because of it's unique nature. Jack explains:

> "You know, over 80% of the high school students here go on to some college or some kind of higher education. This isn't really your average school. The average IQ out here isn't 100. It's more like 115. Tom Strong and I, one time, sat down and took everybody's scores on a standardized test and figured it out. I don't remember exactly where it came out, but somewhere around 115, so if somebody's IQ is 100 out here, they're lucky to be making it. And you know, that's how I feel about some of these kids out here, too. They're lucky to survive."

Despite pressures that students may feel, Jack believes that the integration is made easier because all of the students in the class come from that district. He says:

> "This is our own class. I think that makes it easier to integrate the kids throughout the whole school because these are our kids. These kids would be in the building anyway. Then, too, everyone feels ownership of the program, so that really helps. Also, as far as social aspects go, that is easier because a BOCES kid, someone from a different district, has to leave on a bus at a different time. They can't stay after school for other activities. The other students here aren't their peers after school, and that really makes a difference. I think that's what helps some of these students get along socially."

A Typical Day

Jack Brennan arrives at the school prior to the start of first period. He has time to collect any materials that he may need for the first period class, and to talk briefly with Joanne about the day's activities. Jack has students in his room for the first five periods of the day. During that time he and Joanne work with each student individually on whatever assignment needs to be completed. Depending on the needs of the students in the room, they may alternate times in the room, so that one of them may be out checking folders and talking with teachers.

Students other than those regularly scheduled to be in the resource room that period may come in with a pass from another teacher or from a study hall. They will come in to work on a specific assignment, or briefly, just to talk.

Sixth period is lunch period for Jack and Joanne. They both bring their lunch, and use the time to eat and compare notes about the various students. Some days they will allow students to eat lunch with them in the room. Students often come in without asking for prior permission.

> Jack, Joanne and the observer are sitting at one of the round tables, eating and talking. The door opens and Rick comes in. Jack says to him, "Not today, Rick. We're having a conference and we need privacy." Rick leaves the room.
>
> Mary comes in, carrying her lunch tray. Jack speaks to her, "I'm sorry, Mary, you can't eat lunch in here today."

Jack wants the students to feel that they can come to his room for support and assistance. He also is aware of creating dependency needs in his students and guards against it. He explains:

> "You have to watch what the kids are doing, too. Sometimes they use coming in the room as a cop-out. So that they don't have to deal with peer interaction on the outside. For instance, Mary, sometimes, she'll want to bring her lunch in here rather than deal with the scene in the lunchroom. You have to watch how much you let them get away with and where you draw the line."

Seventh and eighth periods again are instructional periods for students. During ninth period, Jack visits teachers that he hasn't seen earlier in the day. He may have a conference with a student, a parent, or another staff member. Later, he completes homework assignments that the students will have to do for the next day. Especially with math, Jack has to solve the problem first so that he will know how to help the student. Jack leaves the building about 5:00. The job is time consuming, and Jack says that his family often protests about the time that he puts in.

Relationships with Students

The students in the resource program and other students in the building see Jack Brennan as a friend who can be counted on to help them if they need it.

> A boy comes into the room. He is short and stocky, with dark hair and complexion. He is wearing a plaid shirt and jeans. Smiling, he speaks to Jack Brennan: "Mr. Brennan, can you lend me some lunch money?"
>
> Jack replies, "Can you get it from your sister, Joe?" Joe says, "She doesn't have any." Jack reaches into his back pocket and removes his wallet. "I don't have any change. I'll give you a dollar, but bring me back the change." Joe says, "I'll give it to my sister to give to you." Jack answers, "No, you bring it back yourself." Joe agrees, "OK, thanks, Mr. Brennan." He leaves the room.
>
> Jack explains: "That's Teresa's brother. He's not in here, but he stops in sometimes. He's in the Work Study program."

Students in the resource program also see Jack Brennan and Joanne Burns as people who will provide support and encouragement.

> The bell has just rung, signaling the end of eighth period. Students can be seen passing in the hall. The door opens and a tall boy comes into the room. He is wearing jeans and a plaid flannel shirt. He walks to the back of the room and picks up a guitar case that is lying on the floor near one of the bookcases. He speaks, "I have to try out at 2:30 today." He takes his guitar to the front of the room, puts the case on the oblong table, and takes out the guitar. Joanne is seated at the first desk next to the table. He begins to speak to her, explaining about an adaptor that he puts over the strings of his guitar to raise the pitch. He explains that it makes him sing higher. The explanation is not completely clear, and Joanne questions him to try to understand what he is saying. He offers to show her. He demonstrates.
>
> Jack asks him, "Joel, would you like to warm up before you try out?" Joel asks, "What do you mean?" Jack responds, "Well, we could be your audience. If you want to get some practice." Joel, "OK." He begins his introduction.
>
> "Ladies and gentlemen, from the stage of Greenwood High School, I bring you Downtown, by Petula Clark." He strums the opening chords and begins to sing. After completing two verses and the chorus, he says, "This is my own bit right here." He repeats 'downtown' several times, and finishes the song. We all clap.
>
> Joel speaks to Joanne, "What do you think, will I make the show?" She replies, "I don't know. I guess it depends on the other acts that try out." Joel, "Well, I'd better get goin'." He packs up his guitar and leaves the room.

The Teacher Assistant

Joanne Burns is the teacher assistant in the resource room. With Jack, she shares the responsibility for assisting students with their assignments, and making daily contact with the regular classroom teachers. Although she is hired as a teacher assistant, Joanne is a certified teacher. When Jack was in the hospital for five weeks, Joanne was hired as his substitute.

Jack and Joanne have an easy working relationship. Each respects the other's expertise. Jack sees Joanne as having success with some students where he has not been able to. Jack says:

> "You know, we have a girl here who I think is somewhat autistic. She just won't talk at all about her school work. Her older sister was somewhat the same, so there must be something in the family interaction that causes it. She is starting to open up more now outside of the room, with the other kids, but still won't talk about her school work. Joanne has had more success with her than I have had. I don't know if it's because she's a woman or because she just relates better to her personality."

Joanne avoids lecturing students, but she uses casual conversation to convey her own standards for academic performance and behavior.

Several students have just said that they will not be in school on Friday, the day before Spring Vacation.

> Joanne asks, "What will Mr. Brennan and I do Friday if no one is here?" Peter replies, "You can just sit around." Joanne says, "I think that would be very boring with no students here." Peter, "Well, you could drink, then." Joanne, "I've never found that very effective in getting rid of boredom. Have you?" Peter answers her, "I can't drink any more because of my medicine. You know, there were these Mexicans in Boston who got hold of $600. It was all the money they had. They spent it all on bourbon. They would get up in the morning and drink a half pint and then drink a half pint in the evening. I only did it once." Joanne, "That doesn't sound like a very good thing to do."
>
> Joanne gets up from the desk and walks to the front table to see how Joel is coming with his work. She asks, "How are you coming, Joel? What answer did you get for number two?"

In another instance Joanne is discussing an English assignment with Jason.

> Jason walks into the room for fourth period with a bagel and cream cheese which he places on the desk in front of him. Joanne asks, "I thought you weren't going to eat that stuff." Jason just shruggs and smiles.

> Jason says, "We had a test on chapters 19-23 today, but I told her I hadn't read it yet. She told me to try and do it anyway." Joanne in an exasperated tone of voice, says, "You mean you were behind in the reading." Teresa picks up her English book and the review sheet and works quietly. Jason continues to banter with Joanne about the English assignment. He does not seem to consider it a serious matter that he is behind in the reading. He takes out the worksheet and starts to try to answer the questions. Joanne says, "Jason, we can sit here and I can try to help you with the questions, but it doesn't make much sense when you haven't read the chapters." Jason does not answer her.

Joanne Burns has considerable insight into the behavior of the students in the resource room. One of the students has just finished explaining to the observer that she is being discriminated against when the cast for school plays are chosen. Joanne was not in the room while the student and the observer were talking. Later Joanne is talking with the observer.

> "Mary is always looking for something outside to blame instead of looking at the situation realistically, like maybe those people have more talent. Or the fact that they're juniors and seniors and she's just a freshman. And the other thing about Mary, and Teresa too, is that both of them are always sick a lot, or they think that they're sick a lot. They are complaining about having a headache, or a stomachache or just not feeling well enough to do their work, saying things to us like, 'Don't make me do that now. I have a bad headache.' That's why I pushed her today on that test, because yesterday she was in here seventh period and she begged and begged to go to the library. She didn't have any work to do or anything, she just wanted to meet her friends there. So we gave her a pass to go but we made her promise that today she would work on the test. The thing is, with Mary, she'll make these negotiations one day and the next day she's forgotten all about them. But you noticed that when I reminded her of it, she sort of backed down.
>
> It's the same thing with trying out for "Showboat" (the annual spring musical). You know, she came with this great idea, this rather elaborate plan of what she was going to do, but she didn't really work it out. She thinks she's a very good dancer. She's taken dance for seven years, and she thinks that because she has taken dance for that long, she ought to get a part and she doesn't stop to think that somebody else might be more talented, even though they haven't had dance for seven years. But she didn't really plan anything out, then before tryouts, she hurt her leg, and so she never did try out."

THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Six regular classroom teachers were interviewed for their perspectives on the students from the resource room that they have in their classrooms. There were two English teachers, a Science teacher, a Social Studies teacher, a Math teacher, and an Art teacher. All of the teachers had at least one student from the resource program currently in their classes, and most had had previous experience with students from the resource program.

Perspectives on the Labeled Students

Five of the six teachers think that the students from the resource program are appropriately placed in their classrooms. They believe that the students are learning some of the material from their class, and that the students do not present any unique behavior management problems. It is significant that none of these classes are Regents classes and some of the classes are made up of students on the lowest tract.

> "Well, you know Peter, I guess. Kind of an interesting kid, some days he's with it and some days he isn't. But he's no real problem to have in class. He participates and it seems to work out OK."

> "Yes, I'd have him in my class again. I think it's worked out well."

> "The class that I've got, that's quite a group. I've had to modify my whole teaching style for that class, not for Joel. In fact, he's not as much of a problem as some of the others. But with that class, I have to read the stories to them, otherwise they'd just never get it. The only thing about Joel though, he seems to feel that he knows more than I think he actually does. He fits in pretty well. Some of the other students tease him a little bit. It just sort of rolls off him. He's that sort of kid. He's an easy going kid."

> "I use to have this girl in my class last semester, Jean, and she never said anything to anybody. She was real quiet, real withdrawn, but when we'd have one of those tests, every answer on that test would be word for word from the study guide that we used. She really worked very hard."

> "I would say that Mary fits in very well, as a person. She socializes with the other kids, she talks with the other kids, she seems to get along with them very well. That little girl sitting next to her, maybe you noticed, that's Beth. Mary and Beth always talk together. Beth's very sharp and Mary is not so sharp. She doesn't always get everything. But they seem to get along together very well."

The sixth teacher, Linda Anderson, thought that the student mainstreamed into her math class was inappropriately placed. He was unable to comprehend and retain the material that was presented in class.

> "Academically, it's very difficult for him. He has a lot of problems with retention and he just is not able to keep up with the rest of the students. The nature of Peter's problem is that he has a very short attention span, and he just isn't able to always follow everything that I am doing.
>
> I have nothing against taking students who are slow. If I could have a class of about ten students of Peter's calibre that would be fine, but mixed in with the other students, no. We haven't done Peter any favors. It's been a disservice to him this year."

Perspectives on the Kinds of Supports and Training Needed

All of the six teachers think that the support and communication from Jack Brennan and Joanne Burns is excellent. Jack and Joanne are seen as responsive to the teacher's needs. One of the teachers attributes the success of the mainstreaming program to Jack Brennan.

> "Well, a lot of it is having Jack and the people that he works with down in his office down there. You know, Jack's an affective sort of guy. He gets this smile on his face, it just sort of seems to say, 'Gee, it's going to be a good day.' And he's a nice, easy-going man and the kids respond to that. He has all the books down there and all the worksheets, and when a student's having trouble, he goes over everything with him and seems to make things work out. He's a good guy."

However, a need is seen for more concrete suggestions on how to program for students with learning disabilities.

> "I don't mind having the kids in my classes. The only thing that bothers me is that I don't know what to do with them. Most of them are dyslexic, right, and we don't know how to deal with a dyslexic kid. I'm not sure Jack knows. We had this workshop on LD kids and what it mainly seemed to tell us was how to identify an LD kid and once we identified them, to be patient with them, but it didn't tell us anything about how to teach them. That's what I think we need, some workshops telling us how we can teach the kids we've got in our classes."

THE STUDENTS

Typical Students

Generally, the students are neatly groomed and well dressed. A typical outfit for boys would be jeans or chinos, and a cotton or knitted shirt. Very few boys had long hair. Girls dress in jeans and shirts, dresses, or skirts and blouses. They often wear high heels.

Most of the students come from homes where the parents have high academic expectations for their children. That education is highly valued in this community is reflected by the high percentage of students who go on for some form of post high school education.

Students Labeled Learning Disabled

There are thirteen students in the resource program, four of them are girls and nine of them are boys. Generally, in physical appearance, all students in the resource program fit within the norm for the high school. Socially, the students are slightly more dependent on adults than their typical peers. Academically, the students are below the norm for the school, but they are able to function in regular classes with support from the resource teacher and modifications effected by the regular classroom teachers.

The students are generally accepted by their peers. When they are treated differently, it is because of their social ineptness rather than their academic ability. Three students were selected by the observer for detailed observations: Mary, Joel and Peter.

Mary is a freshman who entered the program from Smith Middle School. She has a slender build, with brownish-blond hair and blue eyes. Mary generally dresses in jeans and shirts. When talking on a subject of interest to her or when talking with her peers, Mary is quick to smile. However, in class she mostly completes her work without exhibiting a great deal of affect. Mary seemed distracted by the presence of an observer in the classroom, and on the two occasions when she was observed in the regular classes, she asked for a pass to leave the room when she finished the day's assignment. Mary is a member of the school choir. After school hours she earns extra money by babysitting. Her plans for the summer include participating in a training program for camp counselors.

Joel is also a freshman who came to the program from Rock Road Middle School. Joel is a tall young man who was described by Jack Brennan as a "bear." The description comes from the way Joel moves; he sort of lumbers along as a bear might, moving through the forest. At birth, Joel's parents were told that Joel was probably a mongoloid (a child with Downs Syndrome). His mother recorded that information in his baby book, and one day Joel found the book and brought it to school to discuss it with Joanne Burns. In facial appearance Joel does exhibit some of the physical characteristics of Downs Syndrome, but they are not prominent. Joel almost always has a ready smile and is open and friendly to other students and adults alike. He initiates interactions with adults more readily than with peers. Music is Joel's primary interest. Like Mary, he is also a member of the school choir, and is currently taking piano, voice and guitar lessons. Last year, assisted by his mother, Joel was a member of a rock group. However, when the group disbanded, he was unable, despite his mother's efforts, to become affiliated with another group. Joel says that he practices his music two to three hours a day. His career goal is to become a rock star.

Peter is a junior transfer student from a private school in New England. During the last three years, Peter has been in three different high schools, the first two of them private preparatory schools. Peter is a young man with a slight build that makes him appear younger than his nineteen years. Peter is on medication to control petit mal seizures and is often sleepy and inattentive to the lesson. He frequently appears frustrated by his lessons and by school. Social interactions are difficult for Peter.

Linda Anderson comments:

> "I don't think he has any friends, really, in this group. You know how Peter is... I might be working a problem out on the board, and he has the tendency to just blurt out anything and that didn't go over too well with the rest of the class. I had some difficulty in the beginning of the year trying to establish the kind of classroom deportment that I insist upon, and very often Peter would be blurting out comments and the other students would be upset. Peter was frequently late to class. He also seems to have a coordination problem. It wasn't a case of his just coming in and slipping quietly into his seat. He would come in, and in the process either his books would be knocked on the floor or someone else's books would be knocked on the floor and he would be sort of the butt of that situation."

Peter reports no outside interests. This summer, as in previous summers, he will work as a messenger in his father's engineering firm. He demonstrates no particular enthusiasm for the job or for the profession.

Perspectives of Labeled Students

High School is a pleasurable experience for most of the students. They enjoy the increased independence given them and generally feel competent to handle it.

> "I like it pretty much. I sure like it a lot better here than at Smith (Middle School). There you didn't have any choices of the classes you were going to take. Everybody had to take the same program and it was real hard. I never got good grades or anything, the whole time I was there. Here you've got a choice, and now I'm getting OK grades."

> "What I like most is the freedom. Boy, it's nice being here instead of being at Rock Road (Middle School). Like here, you're free to choose whatever you want. Like, you go to the cafeteria and instead of just having one thing to eat, there might be a fish fry, or a hamburger or a sandwich and you're free to choose. I like that. You could choose the different kind of music you wanted to get into, like I wanted to get into piano so I chose that."

The resource room is seen as a place to get help with homework. Students often complain that the teacher and teacher assistant are too strict and place too many restrictions on them. However, they appreciate the assistance with their subjects.

> "They're always on your back all the time, you know, watching over you, making sure you do this and making sure you do that. And that's hard, but it's good to be able to come in here and do my homework. 'Cause I never do my homework at home. I tried, you know, for all those years, but I could just never do it at home. So, even though they're on your back a lot, at least I get my homework done here."

Although students do not identify the resource room as a place where they receive emotional support, their behavior indicates that they perceive the resource room in that way.

> Ed Johnson is talking about Mary's behavior after taking a test in his English class:
>
> "Now you saw that Mary, when she finished her test, wanted to go down to Jack's 'office,' and that's fine with me. I think it feels good to her to kind of be able to go down there and talk about the test to him. Jack's sort of a fatherly person, and I think that's what she needed right then."
>
> Joanne Burns talks about Mary's behavior:
>
> "Sometimes Mary acts very angry about us down here in the room, and storms out saying she's never coming back. But it seems funny, because everytime she has a free five or ten minutes, she comes down to the room, so it must be that she can't think we're all that bad."

THE CURRICULUM

As much as possible students are integrated into the regular classes of the high school. Students spend approximately 60% to 85% of their day with typical students. Many of the classes that they are integrated into, however, do not contain the brightest students, the scholarship winners, of the high school.

Modifications

The most general modification that was made for students labeled learning disabled was in the grading procedure and in the performance expectations that the teachers would hold for that student.

> "I have to grade her up a little bit. I probably wouldn't give her anything less than a 'C'. You know, you look at a student like this, one of these learning disability kids, and say: 'Well, obviously they're failing the course. But there's just a lot of it that they don't get, and they try very hard.'"

Teachers reported having to modify their teaching styles for the entire classes into which the students were mainstreamed, due to the nature of the class, not the student with learning disabilities. In Linda Anderson's class, however, she said that the modifications that she made were especially for Peter.

> "A real problem that Peter has is to be able to take the notes and keep up with what I was saying. He's not able to write and concentrate at the same time, and I found that when I put an example on the board, I had to go over everything twice, and even then when I'd be at the end of the board, and ready to erase, he'd call 'wait, wait,' and he didn't have it yet. Lots of times he didn't get everything either. About the middle of the year I asked Jack to start working an extra period with him because it was obvious that Peter just couldn't keep up with the rest of the students. The earlier part of the year I was reserving one ninth period a week, just for that kid, to the neglect of my other ninety seven students. After a while, I realized that I just couldn't do it."

Sam Morgan, the art teacher, talks about how he individualizes for Jason:

> "I have to change things a little bit for Jason. He's working on a collage right now, because he has a lot of motor problems which make it hard for him to draw. We're doing a project on cubism and I'm

> having him do it with shapes rather than having to cut something out."

It is easier for Sam to individualize because he individualizes for every student anyway. He looks at each student for ways to develop the creativity within him/her. There is more room for flexibility in his classroom.

Sam also expresses a desire to work with a more homogeneous group, not because of any detrimental effect on more capable students, but because he would like the opportunity to work intensively with learning disabled students to meet needs that he sees they have.

> "My real goals for these guys are that they learn to make decisions and they learn to think creatively, which is something they can use all their lives, in all aspects. Next year, for instance, I've recommended that they take sculpture. That'll be something that they can really get their hands into and make something. I think they'll find it very fulfilling. Joel can use the help in making decisions. When he first came in and he had something to do, he just wouldn't be able to decide what to do with it at all. You know what I'd really like to do with these guys, is if they were in a class all by themselves I could focus on some of the things that they need to think about in terms of making decisions."

The enthusiasm in his voice is evident. He stops, pauses, reflects.

"Of course, that would be defeating the whole mainstreaming concept."

Regents Competency Tests

A major focus of each student's program is preparation to pass the Regents Competency Tests in math, reading and writing necessary to be awarded a high school diploma in New York State. If a student takes and passes a regents then he/she is exempt from the competency test in that area. For non-regents students, however, the competency tests are required. Students are enrolled in remedial classes that are geared specifically toward teaching the skills necessary to pass the competency tests. Students other than those labeled learning disabled are enrolled in the remedial classes.

The Regents Competency Tests pose a major obstacle for many students labeled learning disabled. Although they may complete a number of hours required for graduation, they may be barred from receiving a diploma because they are unable to pass the competency tests.

Bob Stevens comments on the tests:

> "What hurts these kids is the Regents Competency Tests that we have to give now. There is no way that some of these kids will ever pass the tests. We use to be able to give a certificate of attendance, but now we can't. They just can't get a diploma, and it's really too bad. Some of them are quite capable of holding a job, and this (not having a high school diploma) really hurts them."

Students who are labeled learning disabled are allowed some modifications for taking the competency tests. In reading, a student may be told what a word is, but not its meaning, and in math a student may use a calculator. They may take the test in a room separate from other students. Even with these modifications, the students still have difficulty.

Parents

Parents work closely with the resource teacher and the guidance counselor to discuss the program for their child. IEP conferences are conducted as required, with parental participation. If a parent does not attend the conference, after notification, opportunities are made for the parent to discuss the child's program at another time.

THE PRINCIPAL

Bob Stevens, the principal of Greenwood High School is a young man in his late twenties or early thirties. He is young to have the responsibility of the principalship of a large high school. He came to that position by promotion from Vice Principal, when his superior became a district assistant superintendent.

Bob is highly complimentary of all of the teachers in the school and is quick to credit them with the success of programs. He sees regular classroom teachers as more competent in working with students with special needs than they believe themselves to be.

Teachers throughout the district are expressing concern about their lack of preparedness to deal with students with special needs. The district is taking back learning disabled classrooms from BOCES beginning in the fall of 1980, and Bob comments:

> "There's a lot of apprehension on the part of the teachers about what the district is going to do to provide them with some kind of additional training to handle these kids. I guess I often wonder if the kids weren't labeled or if they hadn't been identified through the COH how different it would be if the kid were mainstreamed there anyway. These kids are walking around all over the place. You know, we're at odds about class size, class load, and the fact that handicapped students should be counted twice or three times or whatever. It becomes a financial thing after a while for the school district."

Despite initial difficulties, Bob sees mainstreaming as a force for positive change throughout the school.

> "I think it's (mainstreaming) going to be good in that it's going to force teachers, and I think literally force them, to be more compassionate and to stop and think about what they're doing with kids a little bit more. And I don't mean that in a negative sense. I don't mean that they don't now, but I think that we all get into a rut or a groove and sometimes we don't think about the kids especially. I just saw a guidance counselor yesterday who sent a bulletin around alerting the teachers to the fact that one of our student's fathers was terminally ill with brain cancer and was probably going to be checking out in the next few weeks, just to let the teachers know that they should be sensitive to this thing with these kids. I got the greatest feedback from the teachers. They thanked me for letting them know that. 'It stopped me from putting my foot in my mouth or putting undue pressure on a student.' In a lot of ways, I think you'll find that happening with your special needs people. 'You tell me that these students have some special needs, then tell me what I can do to

DISCUSSION

The program can be described as successful mainstreaming given the following definition of successful. Students are successful academically if they are able to comprehend enough of the content presented in the classroom so that they are not obviously deviant from the rest of the class, and if they demonstrate a sincere effort to master that content. Students are successful socially if their classroom behavior falls within the norm expected for the class, and if they converse with their peers in the classroom on other than the course content.

Several factors that contribute to the success of the program can be identified.

(1) These students are minimally disabled, and they are not noticeably different in academic performance and social behavior from some other non-disabled students in the school.

(2) Jack Brennan utilizes his administrative and interpersonal skills to ensure the smooth functioning of the program. He is thoughtful and systematic in his methods of communication and support with regular classroom teachers.

(3) The organizational climate of the school is one of mutual respect. Jack Brennan praises the regular classroom teachers for their skill, and their openness and acceptance toward his students; the regular classroom teachers acknowledge Jack's support and effectiveness; Principal Bob Stevens credits the classroom teachers with skilled teaching and concern for students; and he credits Jack's ability for the success of the total resource program.

(4) There is a high degree of consistency between what teachers say and what they do. Teachers exhibit a realistic assessment of their own programs.

(5) The program development was thorough, thoughtful and systematic. Prior to initiation, data were collected on the most effective way to conduct

resource program for adolescents with learning disabilities. Those data were utilized when the program was implemented.

CHAPTER 12

A Feather In The Cap: A Self Contained Classroom For Severely Mentally Handicapped 16-21 Year Old Students In An Urban Middle School

S. LeSure

Introduction

Murphy Middle School is located in an old urban neighborhood populated with a diverse mixture of university folk, poor, young professional couples and elderly. The streets are lined with modest wood frame one but mainly two family houses in various stages of repair, disrepair and renovation.

The building itself, a two story brick structure built around 1900 and for a long time a high school, does not quite fit into the landscape. Its mass overpowers the small homes which in places are only the width of a street away. There has been controversy during the last few years about the schools place in the community. Complaints that students and their friends have been distructive of property and rowdy after school events are made. There have been rumors that as part of school consolidation, Murphy school will be closed soon. That talk has caused alarm in some, especially some local parents who see strengths in this neighborhood school and insist that they be maintained. Whether the school will be closed or not has not been decided, but the possibility creates an air of uncertainty and raises questions in the staffs' minds about investing themselves in creating programs that might not last. In addition to the unsettling prospect of the school closing is the notion held by staff that these middle school adolescents are going through a difficult phase and as a result they are a tough, crazy lot to work with.

Enter into this environment, nine "multiply handicapped severely retarded" young adults, the program developed for them is the focus of this case study.

Setting

The Physical Environment

The interior of the school is well-kept. The old metal lockers lining the corridors are brightly painted and the floors shine. The first floor includes offices, cafeteria, art studio, shop and gymnasium as well as several classrooms. The second floor is primarily classrooms but also include the library, a small gym and the teachers' lounge.

The special education classroom is Room 220 located on the main corridor of the second floor. The only other "special ed" in the building is a resource room near the offices on the main floor. The school secretary describes it proudly as "...a nice bright airy room..." The special ed teacher feels strongly about retaining the room next year.

Clearly designed as a home economics laboratory, Room 220 includes a kitchen-like work space with sinks, refrigerator, stove and cupboards. In the northeast corner of the room there is a small circle of student desks. At several places there are large formica tables pushed together for work areas. These are generally used for one-to-one instruction. In addition, a teacher's desk stands near the east wall and various shelves and cupboards line the walls. A small laundry room adjoins the main classroom.

This is the first year that the special ed program has been assigned to Room 220 and the environment still has an unsettled look. While there are stacks of vocational materials in various places, there is little use of the ample shelf space. The special ed teacher feels that she inherited a good deal of grime and junk and that she has had little time to improve the physical environment. In fact, she does seem to be taking rather small, slow steps to change the room. For example in January, leftover artwork from typical students was still taped on the cupboards. A "humorous" poster depicting a task analysis of drinking from a glass (i.e., "put lips to glass...

no points if liquid is spilled on back of head") hung over the sink. By May, the artwork was replaced with large colored pictures and the poster had been removed. Time constraints may be, as the teacher suggests, a primary difficulty in doing more with the physical environment but she also has a somewhat tentative approach toward such changes. For example, when discussing the disarray in the laundry room, she said, "Some of this stuff is from the sixties but I don't know... Somebody might want it so I don't throw it out."

In spite of the room's vaguely unsettled look, the overall impression created is bright and cheerful. The walls have been painted recently and the kitchen and work areas are clean and neat looking. The physical appearance of Room 220 is very much in keeping with the larger school environment.

The Social Environment

Murphy is considered to be a relatively small school by its principal, who says he knows about 90% of its 450 students by name. Although the ubiquitous jeans and t-shirts initially mask differences, the student population reflects the diversity in the neighborhood. About fifty five percent of the students are white, about forty five percent are black and they represent a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.

The social patterns among the students seem to indicate the existence of several coexisting social "environments". Mr. Dunn, the principal, says, "The image that this building has had for the last ten years has been that it's a rough, tough place... That if you go there, you get jacked up in the lav and they steal your lunch money... Kids are fighting all the time... Stuff like that. Point of fact, it is not true." Murphy's reputation as a "tough" social environment seems partly deserved.

Each visit to the school office demonstrated that a large portion of Mr. Dunn's time was being spent on efforts to control student behavior. Stolen property, fighting, unauthorized absence from school seemed to be fairly routine occurrences. At times the adults give the impression that their hard tough stance is barely containing the youthful and aggressive energy of some students. The special education teacher feels overwhelmed by this segment of the student population. "You wouldn't believe some of these kids," she said, shaking her head. "I'd never been around black city kids and you just wouldn't believe it."

However, Murphy also has a contingent of bright, alert and involved students who seem to meet in the cafeteria and in the halls and to go their own way. Posters indicate diverse student interests such as bake sales, skate-a-thons, drama groups, etc.. Even limited observation of and conversation with typical students revealed some bright, articulate teenagers. It should not be assumed that Murphy's social climate is a simple black/white or lower-class/middle class dichotomy. For example, in describing the problems in the student population, one regular class teacher remarked, "And then there's the university kids. I mean I believe in people achieving their full potential and all that but it's the kids that suffer."

The social environment of the adults in the school seems in some ways to parallel that of the students. The teachers are, as the art teacher put it, "close...in groups." The special education teacher laments "From what I understood when I came here, it wasn't a very close knit school. There are friendly groups but I don't think, as a whole, they're not that close. Then there's a whole black and white thing. That probably has something to do with it." Some of the adults seem to feel overwhelmed by the demands of Murphy school and to feel discouraged or negative about the school or its students. This mind-set may set the stage for negative feelings about "mainstreaming" of any sort. For example, one regular class teacher fairly erupted with frustration at the inclusion of handicapped children (not those in this study) in regular classrooms. "What do we do in a classroom," she complained. "How do we handle our other children? What kind of training should they be getting before these other children come in? What kind of extra help will these children need when they're in my room? And how do I handle that when I have twenty-five others? They're just dumping them on us without giving us any kind of help, or training or anything else."

The Special Ed Program

History

The focus of these observations was a largely self-contained program for students aged 16-21 who have been labeled severely mentally handicapped. Introduced in 1978, the program was considered innovative because it brought previously institutionalized students into a typical public school setting. Fieldnotes from an observer at Murphy school during the fall of 1978 indicate that the program was initiated by Bill Perry, the special administrator for the city school district. Murphy school was chosen for the program's location (even though it is a junior high) because "there was space and the administration was willing."

In 1978/1979 there were six special education programs at Murphy school mainly for moderately mentally handicapped and/or emotionally disturbed students. At that time there were two co-principals: Mr. Quinn, a dynamic black man from the South and Mr. Dunn, a young white man in his second administrative post. According to all reports, Mr. Quinn was extremely supportive of the special ed programs at Murphy school. When he resigned, Mr. Dunn became the sole administrator. At the same time, four of the special ed classrooms were relocated. The "how" and "why" of this change is still a source of concern at Murphy and was discussed by several staff members.

Special ed personnel feel strongly that the reduction of special ed classrooms at Murphy is a direct result of Mr. Dunn's dislike of special education. One staff member says, vehemently, "Mr. Dunn pushed them all out. It's his decision you know. He has the right to say whether we stay or go." This attitude fosters constant uncertainty about possible relocation which seems to be made worse by not knowing why they had not been moved out last year.

Mr. Dunn's actions appear to have been based on concern for the continued existence of Murphy school. He believes that maintaining a high enrollment is imperative if Murphy school is to remain open. The more prosperous families in the neighborhood must be convinced to leave their children in the public school system rather than enrolling them in private or parochial schools. The struggle to hold these families leads Mr. Dunn to a concern with what he calls the "tone" of the school. Of the relocated special education classes, he says, "...the EMR classes, they were something else! These kids were able to pass as ordinary people... Whatever that means...at home and in the street, but academically they were having real trouble. Naturally, they became behavior problems. There got to be a bunch of them running through the halls. It gets back to what I was talking about before...tone. There were just too many classes here. They tilted the balance, if you know what I mean. We had about 480 kids and 60 were special ed... That's too many. Far more than you'd find in the general population. Now they're dispersed and that's the way it should be."

The two remaining special ed programs include the self-contained classroom described in this study and a resouce room.* Why was a program serving such very impaired students one of the two programs chosen to stay? Special ed personnel ascribe the choice to public relations. The former special ed teacher says, "We got so much attention last year! It was a one-of-a kind program and we just got a lot of positive feedback... Mr. Dunn just couldn't pull back all that support. The program was like a feather in his cap... That's why he kept it."

Mr. Dunn offers a different rationale: "...it really added something to have the kids in the regular program have the experience of being exposed to someone really different." The fact that the students in question are really different may indeed be a factor in their acceptability. These students could not "pass as ordinary people" and therefore were clearly identifiable as handicapped as opposed to being thought of as "bad" or "tough". In addition, they are not integrated in regular classes as were the less handicapped students.

The special ed staff continues to react to last years changes. Although, Mr. Dunn's comments indicate he expects the special ed program to be at the school next year. The special ed teacher is not convinced. If and when a move is planned, she feels she will be the last to know.

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*Footnote: For the remainder of this study, the designation "Special ed" will refer to the self-contained program, its teacher or its students.

Students

There are currently nine students enrolled in the program under observation: five are female, four are male. All are between the ages of 16 and 21. They were selected at random from two schools exclusively for the disabled when the program began last year. Two students are new this year.

All of the students in this classroom are markedly different from other students at Murphy school. Several have physiological features associated with retardation. Most have extremely poor motor coordination. Even the most advanced students have only rudimentary language. The teachers use sign to a limited extent. The majority reside at T.E.D., a state institution for the mentally handicapped. Only one student resides at home. Although one might expect an additional difference between handicapped students and their younger peers in the area of physical maturity, in fact, most of the students are small and physically immature.

Descriptive material prepared by the special ed teacher indicates the official classroom designation is "multiply handicapped, severely mentally retarded." Her written student profiles describe the student's intellectual functioning as ranging between three and seven years. In addition, one student is described as cerebral palsied and one as autistic.* Having previously worked in restricted institutional settings, the special ed teacher finds herself impressed with the strengths of her students. "To me," she confided, "These kids are brilliant." She compares them favorably with both typical kids, who she sees as threatening, and with the less impaired resource room students, "A lot of their (resource room students) behavior is just emotional problems. They just seem to be troublemakers rather than outcasts like my kids. They're not retarded, they're just troublemakers." Although she describes her students as "outcasts", Mrs. Adams and her aides are, in fact, somewhat defensive about "their" students. Whenever they suspected that the observer had spoken to a typical student or staff member about the special ed students, they were quick to ask what "the verdict" had been and were anxious that people feel positively about their students.

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*Note: Teacher prepared student profiles are attached.

Mrs. Adams feels there is a clean difference between her student's behavior at Murphy school and their behavior at T.E.D.. For example, in describing one student's return after an outing she said, "The minute we got back into the building (T.E.D.) he started that loud talking...really institutional behavior. I mean he looks so normal and then once he gets in the building he acts retarded again." From brief observation at T.E.D., however, the more salient difference was in the teacher's behavior. Within the institutional setting, Mrs. Adams shouted at individual students, showed insensitivity to student needs and barely communicated with adult staff...all extremely discrepant with her usual behavior. It is difficult to say from limited observation whether her behavior change was in response to or a cause of changes in student behavior, or perhaps grows out of a need to demonstrate control of students to the S.D.C. staff.

The principal's view of the special ed students is a major issue among the special ed personnel. Mr. Dunn knows the students by name and repeated several anecdotes about them. He described them as extremely low functioning and feels that their current program pushes them to the limit of their competence. The special ed personnel feel that Mr. Dunn has a negative attitude toward "their" students and this concern reappears again and again in conversation. For example, an aide told the following anecdote: "One day I was standing in the lunch line with Liz... The kids are supposed to line up against the wall and one girl was standing out of line. Mr. Dunn came up and told her to get back in line. She said, "I can't" and rolled her eyes. (O.C. The impression was that standing back in line would have put her next to Liz.) Mr. Dunn told her that she had to get in line but she didn't. She ran to the back of the line instead. Then he looked at me and laughed. I really don't think he should have laughed. Liz didn't really catch what was going on. The girl was sort of funny, I guess, but he shouldn't have laughed. Even if Liz didn't see him, the other kids did. He really has a sort of disdain for these kids." There was no opportunity to observe Mr. Dunn interacting with special ed students. While he did not reveal his personal attitude toward students in conversation, he was always positive in his comments about the program. Nevertheless a recurring and strong criticism of Mr. Dunn is that he does not value lower functioning students.

Peer Exposure and Interaction

The principal feels that the exposure of typical students to those who are radically different is the major value of this program. Almost all school personnel interviewed mentioned social interaction between typical and handicapped students as an important facet of the program. Time and time again, the adults interviewed referred to interaction in the halls and in the cafeteria. Yet direct observation indicates that Murphy school students are often confused or uncertain about how to relate to their handicapped peers and that what little interaction occurs is as likely to be positive as negative.

Some typical students seem simply confused or misinformed about the abilities of the special ed students. For example, consider the following exchange between the observer and typical students who had shared a lunch table with a special ed student:

> "I notice Liz ate lunch with you," I said wondering if I could start a conversation.
>
> "Oh! Did she say anything to you? Was she upset?" asked a young blonde girl with a note of genuine concern in her voice.
>
> "No! Why should she be upset?" I asked mystified.
>
> "Well, we didn't talk to her or anything," she answered.
>
> "Why not?" I asked
>
> The blonde paused for a moment and then said, "I didn't know what she would understand."

One area of potential in this program is the involvement of regular Shapem teachers (shop, home economics, art, physical education and music) with the special class. While this part of the program is discussed in detail under curriculum, one of its biggest contributions may be that these regular class teachers are providing typical students with models of interaction with handicapped students. For example, one young girl was observing the special ed class in the gym. She watched the gym teacher closely as he interacted with the special ed. students and she appeared to be positive about and interested in the students herself. Her positive feelings about the class seemed intertwined with her positive feelings about the gym teacher and her observation of the pleasure he found in his work with the class. The music teacher described a similar incident in which he noticed his typical students closely observing a chance conversation with a special ed student.

Another peer perspective on the special ed students comes from the resource room students. To some extent, the comments of these mildly handicapped students revealed some empathy for their more severely handicapped peers:

> "A building's a building. If we can be here, so can they," said one student.
>
> "Yeah, like D.B., he be callin' them names. Crippled mother-fuckers and all that. It's not right," said another boy.

The resource room students knew three special ed. students by name and expressed a special preference for two - one because of his "good attitude" (i.e., fit in with social expectations, joined in athletics) and one because he had spent some time in the resource room. Their conversation included a variety of scrambled ideas about "retards" including that they are fast runners! The resource room teacher thinks that the students attitudes toward the "retards" may have to do with their own sense of being stigmatized. She explained:

> "I've had a lot of kids in the regular population come in and want to know, 'what is this room about? They're crazy kids!' You know just like this class sees the class upstairs (special ed classroom) as strange, some people see these people as strange...in a lot of ways they're in the same predicament as far as being "special" or something different."

Some of the typical students at Murphy displayed extremely negative behavior and/or attitudes toward the special ed students. In some cases the negative behavior had nothing to do with the particular special ed student involved but seemed more a response to a stereotype of a "retarded" student. For example, consider the following exchange:

> "I'm observing...and I noticed that you didn't want Liz to sit at your table. Why not?"

> "Aww, she makes me sick. How would you like to sit at a table with someone drooling and slobbering all over everything. It'd make anybody sick." (O.C., Liz had neither drooled nor slobbered.)

In other cases the negative feelings of typical students seemed to grow from a misunderstanding of some particular behavior of a special ed student. For example, one special ed student who does custodial work around the building must now be accompanied by a teacher. His friendly but physical pats of greeting were alarming some of the female students.

Support for peers attempts to understand the special ed students is non-existent. The principal states that it is simply not a priority and that in any case such programs can easily slip into condescension when done by "someone who is not trained to do this sort of thing." When the special ed teacher complained about teasing and negative interaction, he suggested that she present information to the health classes. She feels intimidated by regular class students and says that she is "not trained for" presentations to junior high students. The regular class teachers, overwhelmed by other issues, may not see intervention in peer relations as their job either. In short, because the special ed teacher feels trained and responsible for special students and the regular teachers feel trained and responsible for regular students, facilitating interaction is nobody's job.

Curriculum

The classroom program, as described by the special ed teacher, includes the following areas: Personal Adjustment (grooming, travel skills, socialization); Communication (receptive and expressive language, signing); Work Adjustment (task completion, following directions, independent work completion); Home Living (setting the table, preparing simple food, simple cleaning chores); Functional Academics (telling time, counting change, functional sight words, printing names); and Leisure Time Activities. Classroom observation indicated that activities were planned in all these areas, with one exception: No systematic planning for the development of interpersonal skills was observed.

Each lesson or activity presented in this class is broken into small concrete steps which are repeated many times. Teachers use modeling, physical prompts and verbal direction. There is almost constant feedback to the student within a lesson. Correct answers are verbally praised; wrong answers are promptly corrected. Almost all instruction is one-to-one and teachers keep records of student responses. I.E.P.'s are detailed and individualized. The following lesson is typical:

> The lesson centered on "under", "over" and "in". "I noticed people having trouble with those when they are trying to follow directions in the kitchen," explained Nancy.
>
> Nancy gave concrete demonstrations using her own body and Peg's body before beginning a series of questions and directions. "Put your hand under your chin." "Put your hands under the desk." "Where are your hands?" Peg modeled gestures exactly but had trouble articulating "under" and "over". At two points Peg modeled gestures that had accompanied Nancy's demonstration but were clearly extraneous to the lesson and Nancy suppressed a giggle.
>
> After about thirty trials using concrete objects and body parts, Nancy introduced cards featuring a large black "X" under, on and inside various pictured objects. Peg's failure rate increased substantially. Neither teacher nor pupil seemed frustrated, however, Nancy returned to using concrete objects.

The daily schedule begins at 7:30 with the arrival of the special ed staff at the home or institution of the students. The staff works one-to-one with each student as they shower and dress in an effort to teach self-help skills. While such a goal sounds appropriate, in some ways the self-help training is an empty gesture. When the teachers are not available, T.E.D. staff provide what the special ed teacher describes as "custodial care", i.e., there is little opportunity to practice dressing skills. When asked if a student's self-help skills had shown improvement as a result of this program, their teacher replied that he had the skills "with him its just behavior".

The special ed students arrive at Murphy around 9:00 a.m.. Some of the students go directly to an out of the building work training program and others go, on a rotating basis, to a work readiness program at Hughes. Usually four or five students remain at Murphy for a morning of one-to-one instruction. For those who stay at Murphy, the first part of the morning centers around using money, telling time, printing names or recognizing sight words. The second part of the morning might include laundry, ironing, shopping, etc.. During this later part of the morning individuals may receive speech therapy and one student goes to a regular art class (with an aide and when everyone's schedule permits). This is the only point at which the handicapped students attend regular classes and it is not done on a regular basis. The special ed teacher explains:

> "It's partly because of scheduling but it's also a matter of priorities. You know art is important but there's a lot of things I want them to do in class."

While art is seen as an opportunity for the special ed student to interact with peers, one hour of observation in that setting revealed no instance of interaction. Because art is actually part of the "Shapem" program, it is discussed in more detail below.

> At noon, two students, chosen on a rotating basis, prepare, eat and clean up after their own lunch. The others eat in school cafeteria. Participation in the lunch period with typical peers is highly taken by staff as an opportunity for interaction. However, the special ed students, with one exception, choose to eat together. The typical kids choose not to join them. Two days of observation in the school cafeteria yielded one example of interaction--and that was negative.

After lunch, individual and small group activities continue. Two students perform simple custodial chores around the school and are paid for their labor. Apart from the work training this experience provides, it gives these students greater exposure to the school community. In fact, they were among the few special ed students mentioned by name by peers.

The final activity of the day is participation in the "Shapem" program. From 1:15 to 2:00 the special ed students were to have gone as a class to shop, home economics, art, physical education and music on a six weeks rotation. In fact, this is only partly the case.

Shapem

The inclusion of the special ed class in the Shapem program is new this year. Astonishingly different views of its origin were offered. Mrs. Edwards, the special ed teacher at the time, explained that she had approached the principal about integrating the special ed students in regular Shapem classes. He, in turn, suggested that the special ed class go as a group to the Shapem teachers while still allowing for the possibility of some individuals being integrated. Mrs. Edwards felt that Mr. Dunn's offer grew out of a need to account for the time of the Shapem teachers. Mr. Dunn himself describes the special ed participation in Shapem as something he organized with the Shapem teachers both to provide increased services to special ed and to solve "a couple of other things as well." The Shapem teachers are generally unsure of where the initiative began and the tend to blame (or credit) "the law", "downtown", or Mr. Dunn. For example, one teacher offers an explanation tinged with some resentment:

> "Well, it came down from our principal and I believe that he said ...that it is now required by law that these students get more than they're getting and that we should start getting them more into the normal school program. And he felt the Shapem subjects would be most suitable for them at this time. And so, he just said that we have to teach these classes. That's it!"

The reactions to this innovation ranged from strongly negative to matter-of-factly positive. Each of the Shapem teachers sees the reaction of the group as negative but their own reaction as (relatively) more positive. The major factor in this negative reaction seemed to be a predictable one - fear of the unknown. For example, the most vocal opponent of the program when it was first proposed was asked to describe the worst thing about her experience this year:

> "The worst thing was before they came...not knowing what they would be like."

In some cases, information which was meant to reassure made teachers more panicky. One teacher said:

> "And then they told us that there was nine students and we could have up to four aides...that got me nervous! I said, 'That sounds like too many. You mean you need that many to control these kids?'"

At one point the negative feelings were so intense that some regular teachers considered calling in the union.

Lack of training was another factor mentioned in association with the negative reaction. Of the five Shapem teachers interviewed, most had only minimal experience with special education - usually just the experience of having resource room students in their regular classes. Two of the more positive teachers had special ed experiences in other settings. None had pre-service training in special ed.

There was no formal in-service training offered. The principal felt it should have been done but "was not a priority". The special ed teacher during that period had qualms about too much in-service prior to a program's initiation:

> "Sometimes it's better not to do so much preparation in advance. It's like a Rosenthal-Jacobs thing. You say the kids will be this and that in an inservice and the kids will be exactly the way the inservice described them."

On the other hand, she described herself as offering a great deal of support to the home economics teacher - the first teacher to have the group in rotation:

> "I really inserviced her though. I went in with materials; I gave her a book; I taught her about age appropriate stuff..."

In contrast, the current special ed teacher is much more timid about offering specific advice to Shapem teachers and tends to defer to them as the specialists. For example, after commenting on one teacher's strengths and weaknesses, she adds:

> "I can't really tell him what to do - he's the expert in music."

Enriching and complicating the inservice picture are two district specialists who are available to consult with Shapem teachers in the area of service to the severely handicapped. These two specialists see themselves as being available to, but not intruding upon, the Shapem teachers at Murphy school. Mr. Quinn, the specialist in the area of physical education, consulted with the Murphy school physical education instructor about a dozen times. Miss Lang, a specialist in arts and crafts, consulted with the shop and music teachers twice but not at all with the art teacher. These two specialists do not see themselves as introducing any complications. They are available with ideas for curriculum but see the regular classroom teacher as "the expert on her children." The former special ed teacher disagrees:

> "It's much better if it's teacher to teacher... I mean here's a person (referring to the specialists) coming out of left field to tell people what to do."

Given the announcement that they would be teaching nine severely mentally handicapped students, the five Shapem teachers reacted differently. There were differences in their tendency to seek help, in their attempts to modify curriculum and in the degree to which they participated in the program. On the other hand, all five now report positive feelings about their special ed Shapem class.

In spite of the fact that lack of training seemed to be a continuing lament, only two of the Shapem teachers actively sought help from the special ed staff or resource personnel. Interestingly, one of the two was the most vocal opponent initially. In fact, the Shapem teacher whose initial response was most favorable ("Kids are kids - I'll take them.") was the least responsive to outside offers of help. One specialist describes the response of this teacher:

> "I went over to see her and she was really indignant - like 'what do you think you can tell me...?' She was really on my case."

The fact that this latter teacher was one of the few with prior special ed experience may have accounted for both aspects of her response.

Most, but not all, Shapem teachers made some attempt to modify goals, teaching techniques or content for the special ed students. There seemed to be three basic patterns. Some teachers did not really modify their programs. For example, contrast the following teacher/child interaction with the teaching episode described earlier:

> Mrs. Howard moved from child to child, offering a suggestion, demonstrating a technique... Coming to Kay's table, she observed Kay's work. Kay has been picking up one crayon at a time. Sometimes she names the color, mostly she colors small strips at random on the page. Silently, Mrs. Howard leaves and returns with a box of Payons and a small dish of water. "Would you like to try these, Kay?" She offers and demonstrates the technique. Kay looks interested. "Paper," she says. "You can use the same paper," suggests Mrs. Howard. Kay holds the payon but makes no attempt to use it. Mrs. Howard looks at her and then moves away. Kay picks up the paper Mrs. Howard used to demonstrate, tries a few strokes and then returns to her crayons. Mrs. Howard returns to observe and comments, "She knows what she wants."

Mrs. Howard believes that a style of observation and provision of appropriate materials and techniques is the best way to teach her subject. She used the same strategies with Kay that she used with her typical students and they are quite a contrast with the step by step analysis of the special ed teachers.

A second strategy for coping with the demands of the situation was exemplified by Mr. Hansen who drew on his knowledge of primary grade curriculum:

> "We're all certified K-12. I have worked with elementary school children and I've taught these same concepts to first graders... I looked at it more like an elementary school class."

The danger of this approach is noted in the special ed teachers description of Mr. Hansen:

> "(He) really interacts with the kids but there's a lot of stuff that's not age appropriate."

The two Shapem teachers who actively sought and received the most help were the two who apparently made the most appropriate curricular adaptations. For example, Mrs. Casey discussed various instructional strategies (i.e., modeling, using pictures, moving a student through an activity) with special ed teachers. She observed the special ed class and borrowed materials. According to the former special ed teacher, the preparation paid off:

> "I really think she did the best job... She was really direct with them and she developed pretty good relationships with them."

Similarly, the physical education teacher met with the district specialist about twelve times over the year. He was the only teacher who had the kind of individualized goals and record keeping that were used by the special ed staff. It seems clear that teachers must have available (and must accept!) some help in curriculum development for specialized groups. The frustration teachers feel in this area was described by one district specialist:

> "Teachers think they're going to be held responsible to teach the same curriculum they teach to regular kids to special kids. I know Dan called up and said, 'These kids can't do this; they can't do that.' Well they're not going to master the team concept in basketball, for example. Maybe you have to break it down, go back to individual skills. Maybe you have to break that down even. These kids are hard to teach."

Not all Shapem teachers participated equally in the program. One Shapem teacher responded by taking one or two special ed students into one of her regular classes. Another took only half the group at a time. A third became so enthusiastic that he requested the group not rotate and kept them for 18 weeks! These differences were described by the principal as a matter of scheduling. One Shapem teacher presented an alternative explanation:

> "It's just if you screamed loud enough, you didn't have to take them."

Whatever their initial fears or problems, all five Shapem teachers seem satisfied with their experience at this point. This satisfaction comes from different sources. One teacher who set specific goals feels pleasure at student progress. Another simply sees the program as having been the "right" thing to do. A third talks about his own growth:

> "For me to see students like this...was an experience... (It) was a joy, because I didn't know they could latch on to a finer aspect of this world like music and they certainly could."

The special ed teacher also feels the program made a contribution to the education of both pupils and teachers:

> "I think it's good for the kids to experience other teachers and not just have teachers who are going to know exactly how to treat them... It's good for the teachers too. I mean retarded people aren't always in the closet... I wish everyone could get a chance to see these kids so they wouldn't be afraid."

The Shapem program promises to be less controversial in 80/81.

The Staff

Mr. Dunn is a sandy haired, balding man in his thirties who seems to be constantly in motion, interacting with kids and staff. His early professional experience involved teaching affluent, academically oriented kids and he described his first year teaching in the Central City system as a rude awakening. He asked to be transferred from English to Reading almost immediately because he felt that "the wide range of needs" in the city's classrooms was "too much to handle." At the same time, he began course work in educational administration. Murphy school is his second administrative post. Mr. Dunn has never had any experience with special education procedures, curriculum or students.

Mr. Dunn's priorities for Murphy include maintaining a high enrollment, strengthening services for academically oriented students and maintaining a good image in the community. For example, he speaks of the programming with pride:

> "We will probably be the only middle school that offers two full years of science orientation to every student in the building... We have an excellent foreign language program...it's definitely the best in the country... We have a high density of youngsters who have been identified as talented and gifted and they tend to draw other kids."

Mr. Dunn describes his role as principal broadly. Staff interaction, student interaction, teacher/pupil interaction, physical plant, community relations, program development, implementation of school board policy and morale - all are seen as his responsibility.

Although in theory, the special ed classroom is part of this broad scope of responsibilities, in practice Mr. Dunn's relationship to the special ed program is distant. The special ed staff, in particular, are dissatisfied with the role Mr. Dunn plays. They frequently compare him unfavorably with Mr. Quinn, the former principal. It is difficult for people to articulate the differences between the behavior of the two men. In addition, the two special ed. teachers interviewed had somewhat different perspectives on their own roles and thus had different expectations of the principal. The former teacher, experienced and assertive, describes the ideal administrator as supportive but not intrusive. Of Mr. Quinn, she says:

> He trusted my judgment. That's the biggest thing. He gave me complete freedom, complete flexibility.

Interestingly, Mr. Dunn also makes no attempt to intervene in the special ed program. But his behavior is perceived as distant and this distance is attributed to a devaluing of special ed programming. For Mrs. Adams, a first year public school teacher, this distance is not a plus:

> It's kind of confusing because we don't get a lot of supervision... We're in his building but he in a sense feels we're just housed here.

Mrs. Adams also feels responsible to a district special ed administrator with whom she has minimal communication. She added that if she really needs advice, she turns to the principal of . Apart from the presence or absence of supervision, the special ed teachers agreed on two key aspects of the principal's role which influenced their programs: his control of resources (everything from obtaining bus tokens to remaining in the building) and his influence on the attitudes of regular teachers toward special ed programs. As one teacher put it, there is something "inherently autocratic" about a principal's role.

When asked about evaluation of special ed staff, Mr. Dunn indicated that he had gone through the formal evaluation process required by the district. However, he also declared:

> I in no way see myself as a competent observer of the specialized techniques she (Mrs. Adams) would use.

Mr. Dunn described his evaluation of Mrs. Adams as including an examination of her personal and professional goals and of her ability to identify and plan for student needs. The evaluation was based on two visits to the classroom and a review of I.E.P.'s. While Mr. Dunn praised Mrs. Adams and her program, the evaluation raised some suspicions in the special ed room:

> After doing nothing all year, not coming in or offering help or anything, he writes all of these comments on the I.E.P.'s.

The Special Ed Staff

The special ed classroom is staffed by a certified special ed teacher, two teachers aides and one health aide. The teacher, however, does most of the planning and is primarily responsible for the program. Mrs. Adams is a small, slender woman in her late twenties. Her previous teaching experience has been with younger, profoundly delayed children in an institutional setting. This is her first public school experience.

In her classroom, Mrs. Adams has a confident tone in her voice and a business-like manner with the students. She is methodical and persistent and seems to eventually prevail, even in potential conflict situations. For example:

> Seventeen year old Ken circled the table to investigate the groceries. He attempted to grab a package from Liz's hands. "No", she roared. They physically struggled over the package and Ken pulled it away. Mrs. Adams came to Ken's side and quietly directed, "Give it back, Ken." No response from Ken. "Give it back," she repeated sternly. Still no response. She repeated her direction a third time, still calm. Ken slowly returned the package to Liz and turned away.

Both Mrs. Adams and one of the aides seem to have a closeness with students that is not apparent between regular class teachers and students. Physical gestures of affection, given and received or a moment of quiet companionship born simply of having spent a lot of time together seem to indicate that the special ed personnel do not have the same feeling of being "on guard" or of maintaining social distance that seems to characterize some interactions between regular class teachers and students. In addition, the staff seems to identify with the role of "outcasts" that they ascribe to their students. They were extremely interested in how others in the school viewed "their" students. Mrs. Adam's behavior toward one of her students in an institutional setting provided a jarring counterpoint to the style noted above. As noted earlier, it is difficult to determine the origin of this change.

Mrs. Adams is responsible for the direct supervision of three aides. Two are attractive women in their twenties who have had some college education and have been part of this program for two years. The third aide is a man in his thirties who was transferred to Murphy this year. The two female aides function very much like teachers in the classroom. While they do not plan curriculum, they teach specific concepts in a one-to-one situation and supervise small groups in activities. They accompany students to Shapem classes along with Mrs. Adams. Although one of these young women has a more informal, outgoing attitude than the other, both seem positive about the program. For example:

> It's a good program. Sometimes it's a little overstaffed. But other times, when all the kids are here, we wouldn't be able to get anything accomplished without all the adults.

Mrs. Adams, in turn, has an extremely positive view of these aides:

> Ellen and Kay are terrific. They've been here longer so in some ways they know more than I do... I've never had such good aides before.

There seems to be an easy give and take between the women in the room and matters such as classroom chores or lunch breaks seem to be easily arranged.

The role of the third aide is very different. On only one brief occasion was he observed teaching a specific concept. He was always the aide chosen to accompany students to work training or other out of building activities and thus spent far less time in the classroom. Mrs. Adams describes this aide's behavior as problematic.

> Hal hasn't picked up on anything, no ideas or teaching techniques or anything. I don't even think he likes some of the kids.

Mrs. Adams is not an assertive supervisor. She feels especially awkward with Hal because he is older and because he's a man. Although neither Ellen or Kay mentioned it, Mrs. Adams feels the two women resent their co-worker because he does "less work for more money." Evidently Hal is categorized as a health aide and the two women are categorized as teachers aides. The women investigated the possibility of changing their categorization but were denied the change, according to Mrs. Adams because of their sex.

Two different perspectives on the role of the teacher were evident in interviews. The first role, described by the former special ed teacher and the district specialists, involves an active assumption of advocacy and administrative responsibility. For example the involvement of regular teachers in the program is seen by some as dependent on the efforts of the special ed teacher. One specialist offered the following advice:

> Whether you can get them (regular teachers) to work with the kids depends on personality...if they like you personally.

For this reason, the former teacher saw formal inservice less effective than teacher to teacher contact with the special ed teacher diplomatically offering regular teachers information as necessary. By the same token, she saw herself as "managing" interaction with the principal:

> I don't believe some of the things I did. I said to the aides that I couldn't believe the way I was into playing the game... I mean sometimes you have to be manipulative.

Although several informants referred to aspects of this assertive teacher role, it is not the role assumed by the current teacher. Mrs. Adams is very focused on in-classroom activity. She does not see inservice of regular teachers as her responsibility. She does not see fostering interaction with typical kids as her responsibility. Her contact with adults outside her classroom is limited and based on formal channels of communication versus personal ones. She feels socially and professionally isolated from the rest of the staff. Whether this version of the teacher role is a result of Mrs. Adam's non-assertive, quiet nature, her lack of public school experience or a combination of factors is open to speculation.

Mrs. Adam's has carefully and methodically carried out the special ed program as she inherited it. She has not actively promoted or managed interaction between her classroom and the rest of the school. This has several implications. On the positive side it may encourage regular teachers to advocate themselves. For example, upon hearing that the special ed class was not being called down to assemblies, the music teacher took the matter up with the office himself. More likely, however, the result of Mrs. Adam's reticence is to deprive regular teachers of a valuable resource and to make further program growth less likely. For example, who initiates the next logical step in the Shapem Program? Not us, say the district specialists, "we're in no way anybody's supervisor." The Shapem teachers have recovered from their initially negative reaction and may be open to further involvement but they are unlikely to initiate change. While Mr. Dunn responded positively to the initial request for Shapem services, he does not seem sufficiently involved to generate new ideas. Similar gaps have been discussed in the areas of inservice education and peer interaction. In short, although the program appears to have two administrators, it has administrative problems:

> No one is managing communication between regular and special ed teachers; no one is providing a vehicle for program change. Apparently this role was once filled by the former special ed teacher. Will Mrs. Adams fill the gap? In part, this depends on her recognizing that there is a gap. For example, when asked who advocates for her students, she paused for some time and then replied, "Me?" questioningly.

She may need more public school experience to decide that no one else will do it. It also depends on her personal abilities. Neither of her "supervisors" appear close enough to offer active support in expanding her role.

Is the Murphy Program Mainstreaming? Is It Successful?

If asked directly, most of the staff at Murphy defines mainstreaming as the inclusion of labeled children in typical classes. The Murphy program does not fit that definition. Yet, some people are reluctant to say that it's not mainstreaming. For example, the principal says:

> It's really mainstreaming in two different ways. First, these students are in the same building with regular kids, have lunch together and to a very limited extent participate in some regular classes together... It's not really integration, but it definitely qualifies as 'least restrictive environment.'

Another special ed staff member described it as "social interaction" vs. true "mainstreaming". The latter, according to Kay, requires that the regular class teacher accept the responsibility for the formulation of specific goals. Other teachers feel the Murphy program is clearly not an example of mainstreaming. The special ed teacher herself seems particularly immune to this semantic delicacy and says quite plainly:

> This is not mainstreaming. Just to put a classroom into a (school) building versus putting it in a segregated setting.

It may be that the tendency to debate whether this is or is not an example of mainstreaming has to do with the severity of disability present in this student group. If they were students labeled TMR or EMR, it seems extremely unlikely that this program would be described as mainstreaming. The unspoken message at Murphy seemed to be: It's not really mainstreaming, but it's as close as this type of student has gotten.

If this isn't mainstreaming, should it be? One district specialist describes it as "Kindergarten-level mainstreaming". He explained that too often kids were thrown into an integrated setting without preparation. He sees the procedure of regular teachers working with the special ed class as a group as a first step:

> Some of these kids...can be moved into regular classes next year. Maybe they'd be in both classes for awhile and then the special class could be dropped.

While most of the Shapem teachers are open to further innovations, they expressed mixed feelings about integration in regular classrooms. Some typical comments:

> I'm sure that with an aide to watch them, they could do almost everything the others could do in regular classes...(but) the only advantage I might see would be for the other students... seeing them work...seeing how they function.

> I've been thinking about it. I wouldn't like to see them integrated in the regular classes. But there are a lot of kids in this school who could use some help with individual skills. I'd like to see about five of them help with Mrs. Adam's class in the gym.

Although there is the potential for movement toward "mainstreaming" in a more traditional sense, such movement would probably require an assertive advocate and at present there is not one.

Whether the program as it exists is considered "successful" was not a major issue at Murphy. Most people described success as 1) progress toward individual goals for students (i.e., more appropriate behavior, potential for sheltered workshop) and/or 2) a more general social acceptance (i.e., interaction, regular teachers feeling "comfortable" with kids). The administrative and staff changes discussed above seem to have affected this second component of "success" adversely. Progress in becoming an integral part of Murphy has been slow. As one district specialist put it:

> They still have a long way to go.

Clearly, the most powerful force now available is the Shapem program.

The definition of "success", the definition of "mainstreaming" even the style of teacher/principal interaction may have been influenced by the severity of the handicapping conditions of the students in this study. Consider this report of a conversation between principal and teacher:

> He said, 'I just looked at your I.E.P.'s. How do you do it? How do you stay in the classroom and not see any progress?' Well, you know I see progress. He just doesn't tune it to what we're doing.

The special ed personnel interviewed feel you have to work harder to get support for lower-functioning students. They feel the prevailing attitude is "why bother". Their struggle must be made more difficult by a paucity of models of successful mainstreaming for severely and profoundly handicapped students.

CHAPTER 13

The Class and Faye:
SOCIAL INTERACTION OF A HANDICAPPED CHILD IN AN INTEGRATED FIRST GRADE CLASS

Stephanie Leeds Bruni

This first grade class at Monroe Elementary School was not selected because it was nominated as exhibiting exemplary mainstreaming practices. In fact, the research for the case study presented here was completed before the other studies in this volume began. It was selected for in-depth observation for my dissertation research for several reasons. Preliminary observations indicated that the child with a disability that was in this class, Faye, experienced a very low level of peer interaction. In addition, Faye has Downs Syndrome. I was interested in how a child with a demonstrable difference would get on in a typical class. Finally, this class was the only first grade available to me for in-depth study. Because first grade is typically a child's first full day, intense school experience I wanted to understand more about this important grade.

A FIRST GRADE CLASS AT MONROE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This first grade class at Monroe Elementary School was selected for in-depth observation for several reasons. Preliminary observations indicated that the handicapped child, Faye, experienced a very low level of peer interactions. In addition, Faye has Downs Syndrome. I was interested in how a child with a demonstrable difference would get on in a typical class. Finally, this class was the only first grade available to me for in-depth study. Because first grade is typically a child's first full day, intense school experience, I wanted to understand more about this important grade.

This case study describes the setting and its participants at Monroe. Of particular interest is the salient features of the teacher's influence on the nature and quality of peer interactions in general, and Faye's experiences in particular.

The School Itself

Monroe is one of seven elementary schools in a central school district located near Central City. It is situated in a residential area of a small suburb. The school building is a one-story red brick structure, which houses grades kindergarten through six. Behind the school is a very large field. Outdoor play equipment is situated on this field, close to the school building.

Class Participants and Organization

Teacher

Ms. Karen Fosse is the teacher. Ms. Fosse is a tall, slim, Caucasian woman about 36 years old. She has short, straight blonde hair, a long thin face, fair skin, and freckles. She speaks with a clear voice in a pleasant tone. She is usually well dressed. Ms. Fosse has been teaching first grade for 15 years.

The Integrated Child

Faye has been labeled "educable mentally retarded". She is Caucasian, of average height and weight, fair skin and shoulder length light brown hair which is curled on the ends and drawn back from her face. Faye has the characteristics associated with Down's Syndrome.[1] Faye wears typical clothing jeans, shirt, sneakers. She carries a lunch box and has and uses a locker in the hallway. Faye is not as articulate as the other children in the class. She sounds more childish than the others, speaking less clearly, using shorter sentences with fewer words.

> (The class is sitting in a group in the back of the room. The children are telling about something of interest to them.) Ms. Fosse says, "Faye, do you have anything to share?" Faye replies, "No. I have some news." Her voice is low. Ms. Fosse says, "Some news? Okay, tell us your news." Faye says softly, "Jody play in my room. Jody play upstairs and downstairs." Ms. Fosse repeats this, then says, "Did you play with him?" Faye nods. Ms. Fosse asks, "Did you enjoy it?" Faye nods. Ms. Fosse says, "Do you feel better?" Faye nods.

Faye is officially enrolled in this first grade. She goes to resource class twice each day, once just before lunch (for about 15 minutes) and again in the early afternoon. She is in resource class a total of about one hour. Every day, just prior to her morning resource class, Faye has one-half hour of speech therapy. Faye attended kindergarten at Monroe, and prior to that, she received speech therapy on a regular basis at the school.

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[1] Sarason and Doris (1969) report that "Down's Syndrome is typically characterized by a moderate to severe degree of intellectual defect" (p. 366). However, they also cite authorities such as Benda (1965) who suggest that many children with Down's Syndrome fall in the "educable" rather than "trainable" range of mental retardation, even though their speech and language are delayed. This latter description appears more fitting for Faye.

Other Children in the Class

In addition to Faye, there are 17 other children in this class, six girls and 11 boys. All Caucasian. In general, the children are well-groomed and well-dressed, including appropriate outer garments for inclement winter weather. Many of the children walk to and from school.

Classroom and Seating Arrangements

This first grade classroom is rectangular with a gray tile floor. The walls are aqua. Much of the basic structure of the room is fixed--the chalkboards in front and back, the counter area, cabinets, and sink along the wall, the shelves and counter tops along the opposite wall. The decorations consist of the alphabet, a color chart, name cards on most every object, e.g., "shelf", "clock". The other decorations include a calendar, number chart, and a variety of other materials typical of classrooms.

The classroom is well-stocked with games, puzzles, clay, paint, and other learning materials. The round table in the front left-hand corner of the room is a "listening" area. There is a tape recorder in the center of the table, and six pairs of earphones connected to it. Several extra desks, located in various areas of the room, serve as work spaces for the particular areas, e.g., paint area, manipulative materials area. The number of spaces (i.e., desks or chairs) in these areas determines the number of children that can be there at any given time.

Each child is assigned a desk. All desks are movable, made of metal, and equipped with formica writing surfaces and open shelves directly below. The children's desks are arranged in six "tables". Each "table" consists of three desks side by side. The "tables" are arranged in rows, three on each side of the room. All desks face the front chalkboard.

The seating arrangement in this class underwent one major change and one minor change during the observation period. Figure 1 is a schematic drawing of the class showing placement of furniture as well as the seating arrangement in effect at the beginning of the observation period. Figure 2 indicates the arrangement at the close of the observation period. In both instances, the seating pattern consists of girls occupying the middle desks in each "table", and boys occupying desks on either side. Faye, however, in both setups, occupies an outer, center aisle desk in a middle "table". As will become evident, this arrangement is compatible with Ms. Fosse's way of relating to Faye, a style that fosters Faye's dependence on the teacher rather than her integration into the mainstream of class life.

Organization and Activities

Seating arrangements are made by the teacher primarily on the basis of children's behavior and interactions. In some instances, children are placed together if one child is seen by the teacher as being a "good model" for the other or able to help the other. Children are separated if they are not getting along or if too tightly knit groups are beginning to form. In general, however, the pattern remained, girls in the middle seats, with the exception of Faye, and boys in the outer seats at each "table".

Reading and mathematics receive major emphasis. There are three reading groups, "Thunderbirds", "Jets", and "Stormtroopers", which meet with the teacher each day in a small area in the back of the room. These groups represent skill levels. In addition to formal reading groups, the children complete assignments in phonics, sound recognition, sentence writing. Mathematics is usually taught to the class in the afternoons, although frequently the children have a math related assignment to complete during the morning. "Special" classes, such as art, music, gym, and library,

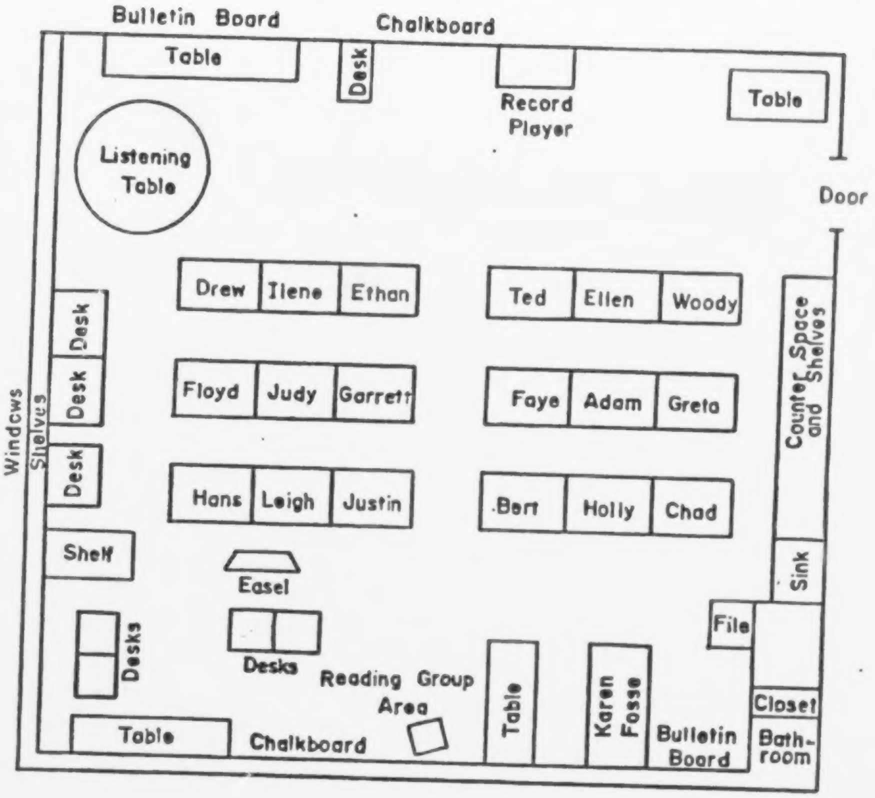
Bulletin Board
Chalkboard
Table
Desk
Record Player
Table
Door
Listening Table
Drew
Ilene
Ethan
Ted
Ellen
Woody
Desk
Desk
Desk
Windows
Shelves
Floyd
Judy
Garrett
Faye
Adam
Greta
Counter Space and Shelves
Hans
Leigh
Justin
Bert
Holly
Chad
Shelf
Easel
Sink
File
Desks
Desks
Reading Group Area
Table
Karen Fosse
Closet
Table
Chalkboard
Bulletin Board
Bath-room

Figure 1 A schematic drawing of the first grade classroom at Monroe Elementary School (beginning of Phase 2).

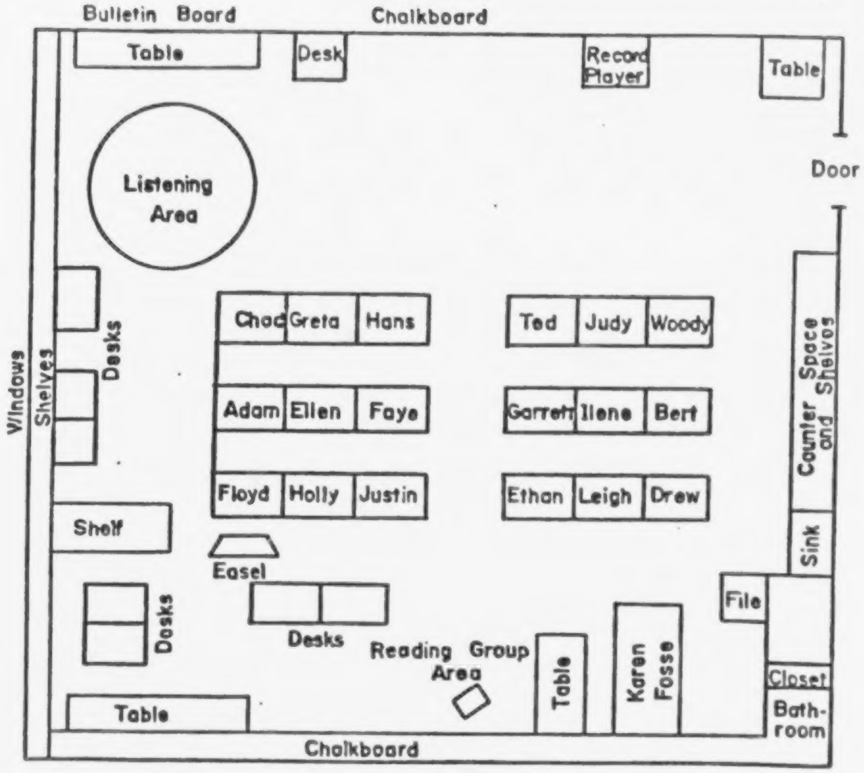
Bulletin Board
Chalkboard
Table
Desk
Record Player
Table
Door
Listening Area
Windows
Shelves
Desks
Chad
Greta
Hans
Ted
Judy
Woody
Adam
Ellen
Faye
Garrett
Ilene
Bert
Floyd
Holly
Justin
Ethan
Leigh
Drew
Counter Space and Shelves
Shelf
Easel
Sink
File
Desks
Desks
Reading Group Area
Table
Karen Fosse
Closet
Bathroom
Table
Chalkboard

Figure 2 A schematic drawing of the first grade classroom at Monroe Elementary School (end of Phase 2).

are scheduled at various times during the day.

The general daily routine is as follows. Children arrive at about 9:00 and begin to settle down in their seats. The teacher calls for lunch orders. Then, the class recites the Pledge of Allegiance and sings a patriotic song. Afterwards, the teacher directs the children in reviewing the date, weather, and "special" class scheduled for the day. The teacher gives instructions for the morning's work, then the assignments begin. Shortly afterwards, the first reading group is called.

During the morning, Ms. Irma Gardner, the perceptual teacher, brings a cart of materials into the classroom and works with several children on the floor in the front of the room. Ms. Gardner is a short, heavy-set Caucasian woman of about 40 years. She has dark brown hair, wears glasses, and dresses neatly. She conducts a special perceptual program, funded through a federal employment grant. All first graders participate in this program.

When the children complete their assignments, they place their papers in metal trays on the counter near the sink. They are then permitted to do activities at various stations around the room. The morning's activities are, therefore, reading groups, perceptual work, individual work, and whatever "special" class might be offered.

Lunch is at 11:45 in the classroom. Ms. Mary Engel, a lunch aide, monitors and assists the children during this time. Ms. Engel is a Caucasian woman of average height and weight, about 55 years of age. She has short gray hair, dresses casually, and speaks clearly. Ms. Engel helps the children get their lunches ready, when needed, and reads them a story while they eat.

At about 12:30 Ms. Fosse returns to the classroom and the children have playtime until 1:15 or 1:30. The major afternoon activity is mathematics, with other teacher-directed events, such as reading a story or sharing verbally. Interspersed throughout the day are non-boisterous physical activities such as games and exercise led by Ms. Fosse. The children are dismissed around 3:00.

Faye is present in the classroom during most of the day and completes worksheets given to her by the teacher. These are usually different from those of her classmates, except when the worksheet is a crafts project or simple exercise. Faye occasionally joins the "Thunderbirds" reading group for letter/sound recognition or an activity at the "listening table".

Teacher Influence and Interaction

Karen Fosse is the focal point of her classroom, the primary source of information, instruction, learning, and activity. She is organized and highly directive. In addition to determining the environmental arrangements and the children's seating arrangements, Ms. Fosse controls the specific content and pace of each day. For example, she signals the start of each day's events, leads the children in all the large group activities, including games as well as lessons, prepares and presents the daily assignments, selects and arranges materials throughout the classroom, and conducts all the reading groups.

Ms. Fosse keeps a close watch over her students throughout the day. Even while she is conducting a reading group in the back of the room, she faces out to the rest of the class and continues to monitor them, frequently calling to particular children, to remind them to continue working. Ms. Fosse checks the children's work, gives help when needed, and responds to children's behaviors, requests, questions and activities.

Karen Fosse selects children to perform a variety of tasks that appear to have high status in the classroom. For example, each morning she selects one student to be the "messenger" who carries the attendance report and lunch orders to the office. Other such high-status activities include turning off the tape recorder after one's group has finished at the "listening table", distributing materials to the class, passing out corrected papers. Very often, being selected to perform one of these high-status activities is a reward for desired behavior. With her back to the class, for example, the teacher says, "I'm looking for some children to be helpers. I wonder if I'll find anybody." The children immediately become silent, sit straight in their chairs, facing front, with their hands folded on their desks. The teacher then praises this behavior and selects students.

Karen Fosse's style of organization, management, teaching, and communication clearly establishes her forceful presence and influence in her classroom. The children follow her direction, carry out her instructions, and generally meet her expectations with minimal negative sanction required.

Karen Fosse holds specific expectations of her students, as evidenced in both the classroom arrangements and her interactions with the children. Many of these expectations involve management, discipline, and school work issues. The children are expected to abide by the rules. For example, the number of seats available in any particular activity area of the room determines the maximum number of children permitted to be there at any one time, and only after all assignments are completed. The children are expected to work independently, neatly, and completely. School work, i.e., assignments, reading groups, and lessons, clearly takes precedence over play and even over supplemental work with materials around the room.

Karen Fosse also has well-defined expectations for her students' peer interrelationships. Although one overall goal seems to be for the students to become self-reliant and independent, other goals are to be able to seek help from and give assistance to each other when needed; to refrain from interfering with each other's endeavors; to respect each other's belongings, roles, and duties; and to enjoy each other's company. Many of her interactions with various children concern one or another of these goals.

> Kurt comes in and walks over to the desks by the windows. Adam calls to him immediately, "Sit next to me today." Kurt says, "Okay." To Ms. Fosse, Adam says, "Look, Kurt's sitting next to me." He sounds excited. Ms. Fosse answers, "That's okay."
>
> Karen Fosse walks over to Hans from her spot in the back of the room. She bends down to him, putting her arm around his shoulder. She speaks softly. Ms. Fosse says, "You have a choice. Either you do your work and stop disturbing others or I'll have to put you in an isolation booth." She points to a table behind the open classroom door. Ms. Fosse walks over to the door and turns the number chart so it is easily seen from Hans' position. She returns to Hans and says, "You decide." Hans faces his desk, lowers his head and shoulders, and begins writing on his paper.

Karen Fosse's expectations hold consistently for all her students except one, Faye. Frequently and in important ways, the expectations for Faye's abilities, behavior, and her relations with her peers are discrepant with what appear to be major goals.

Considerable emphasis is placed on peer help-seeking and -giving as a means of learning. There is no stigma attached to needing help, and the children are encouraged to use each other and the adult(s) in the classroom on such occasions. The expectation is that the children will know when they need assistance and be able to get it.

Ms. Fosse calls to the children from her desk, "Check your shoelaces. If you need help tying your shoes, ask your neighbor." She immediately leaves her desk, walks quickly over to Faye, and ties her shoelaces for her.

Ms. Engel (the lunch aide) enters the classroom while the children are bringing in their lunches. Faye carries her lunch pail to her desk and sets its contents on her desk top. Ms. Engel goes immediately over to Faye and, without saying anything, opens her thermoses for her. She then calls to the other children, "Anyone need help?"

(Several children, including Faye, are working on projects involving cutting, folding, and pasting to make elves.) Adam carries his elf body, which requires back and forth folding like a fan, to Chad for help. Chad folds the paper. Ms. Fosse calls from the back of the room, "Don't do it for him, Chad. Just show him how. Helping means just getting them started." Chad returns the paper to Adam who finishes folding it. He returns to his seat. Ms. Fosse calls from the back again, "Now, Adam, why don't you help Faye? Show her what Chad just showed you." Adam approaches Faye. Faye continues to cut, while sitting on Ellen's desk. She does not offer her paper for help. Ms. Fosse says, "Faye, do you want Adam to help you?" Faye shakes her head no. Ms. Fosse says, "You look like you need help. Adam needed help. Why don't you let him help you?" Faye nods. Adam takes Faye's paper and folds it once or twice. Most of the folding is done already. After a few seconds, Adam hands it back to Faye and says out loud, in a tone expressing some degree of surprise, "She did pretty well." There is no response.

(Six children, including Faye, are at the "listening table," wearing earphones and doing an activity.)
After the tape is over, the children remove the earphones and return to their desks. All of a sudden, Ms. Fosse jumps up from the group in the reading area, and races toward the round table, with a panicked look in her eyes. Faye is trying to get her hair out of the earphone wire. On her way to the "listening table," Ms. Fosse smiles and says, anxiously, "I thought she had it wrapped around her neck." She frees Faye, re-curls her hair twisting it in her fingers, and returns to the reading group. Faye returns to her desk.

These few incidents suggest different expectations for Faye as opposed to her peers. Unlike the other children, Faye is seen as usually needing help and incapable of working out problems herself or calling for help when she needs it. In addition, she is excluded from the general maxim about neighboring assistance.

Karen Fosse speaks to her students clearly and with an even tone of voice. She does not scream. Her manner of speaking conveys the message that her students can and do understand, and will meet her expectations. With Faye, however, the situation is somewhat different. Ms. Fosse frequently gives detailed explanations or statements when speaking to Faye about a variety of things, including rules, assignments, lessons, activities. Her tone of voice in these instances is high-pitched and singsong. Except on rare occasions, Faye is not required to respond verbally, and usually she does not even respond gesturally.

Respect for each other and for each other's belongings, work, and duties clearly receives a major focus in this class. The children are encouraged through instruction, praise, and occasional reprimand to be polite to each other, to take turns, and to be proud of each other's good work. Even minor infractions are dealt with as illustrated in the following example.

> (Six children, Hans, Leigh, Ellen, Floyd, Garrett, and Judy, are sent to the "listening table" for an activity. Karen Fosse selects Leigh to turn the tape recorder on and to shut it off.) The children at the listening table take off their earphones. There is a bit of a scuffle as Hans shuts off the machine while Leigh is also trying to shut it off. Ms. Fosse calls from the back of the room, "Hans, what is the problem?" Hans says, "I was trying to shut it off." Ms. Fosse replies, "Who is supposed to shut it off?" Hans answers, "Leigh." Ms. Fosse says, "Well, don't you have something to say to someone?" Hans turns to Leigh and says, "I'm sorry." The children return to their desks.

This kind of teacher-child interchange is common. However, it is significantly different from the type of interchange that occurs when Faye is involved, as evidenced most poignantly in instances where Faye appears to display behavior described by her teacher as "sticky fingers".

> (Faye and Ellen are sitting at their desks, adjacent to each other. Ms. Fosse is with a reading group in the back of the room.) Ellen reaches for some crayons on Faye's desk. Faye pushes Ellen's hand away. Ellen frowns at Faye. After a short while, Faye reaches for the paper and crayons on Ellen's desk. Ellen pushes Faye's hand away and frowns at her. Faye touches again. Ellen's expression indicates growing annoyance. She looks back to Ms. Fosse who is working with the reading group. Ms. Fosse does not notice and does not respond to Ellen's look. Ellen turns back to Faye and says, "Faye, don't touch any of my stuff." Faye smiles broadly, does not look up from her paper, and continues writing. Ms. Fosse calls the reading group to which Ellen belongs. Ellen goes to the back of the room and stands at the table in the back looking at Faye. Faye looks back at Ellen and smiles. Ellen frowns. Ellen takes a place on a rug remnant on the floor in the middle of the back row. She looks back at Faye. Faye is facing front, smiling, Ms. Fosse then calls Faye to join the group for "sounds". When the opening sound recognition exercise is finished, Ms. Fosse says, "Okay, Faye. Go back to your desk." Faye gets up and walks back to her desk. Ellen says, "And don't touch my stuff." It is a brisk, unemotional order. Ms. Fosse smiles at Ellen, and says in a soft reprimand, "Now, you lend her your crayons sometimes."

The victim of Faye's "sticky fingers" receives the reprimand in this instance rather than Faye, and Ellen continues to be concerned about her lost materials which she apparently frequently finds in or on Faye's desk.

> Ellen returns from her reading group to her desk and looks around. She looks on Faye's desk, then settles into her work. She talks with Chad, who sits in front of her, about Faye. Ellen is frowning. Ellen says, "She steals my crayons." Chad replies, "Put them on the other side of your desk." Ellen: "I did. She still steals them." Chad: "Then tell the teacher." Ellen: "I did." Chad shrugs his shoulders and turns around to his desk. Ellen shakes her head, frowning, and continues her work.

Despite her statement about Faye's having "sticky fingers", Ms. Fosse seems not to give much support to Ellen, the apparent victim of this behavior. Evidently, all of this is very disturbing to Ellen who seems to have exhausted the acceptable solutions.

Faye's "stealing" is not only ignored and thus tolerated; it is also on occasion rewarded, by the supervising adult.

> (It is lunchtime. Ms. Engel is in the classroom.) Ellen stands next to Faye's desk, with her hands on her hips. She says in an annoyed tone, "Faye!" Faye is drinking out of her thermos. She does not look at Ellen. Ellen sits down, frowning. Ms. Engel walks over to the two girls and says, "What's the matter?" Ellen says, "Faye stole my cupcake." Greta turns around and nods, saying, "Faye stole her cupcake." There is a chocolate cupcake on Faye's desk. Ms. Engel asks Faye, "Faye, did you bring this cupcake from home?" Faye nods her head, while she is drinking from her thermos. Simultaneously, Ellen and Greta say, "No, she didn't." Ellen repeats, "It's mine." Ms. Engel picks up the cupcake and starts to place it on Ellen's desk. Ellen holds up her hand and says angrily, "I don't want it after she ate it." Ms. Engel returns the cupcake to Faye. No other words are spoken. Faye eats the cupcake.

Although there is some doubt that Faye is involved in stealing as often as Ellen accuses her of it, there are standards of behavior for Faye that are distinctly different from those for the rest of the class. The children (including Faye) are aware of this, especailly when they observe a child scolded for turning off the tape recorder in another's place, and Faye allowed to retain another's belongings which she has taken. This kind of double standard mitigates against Faye's being accepted by her peers and experiencing positive social interactions.

Karen Fosse is a warm and sensitive teacher who wants the best for all of her students. She expresses concern about Faye, and whether or not Faye would be "better off" someplace else, "with children she feels comfortable with and can communicate with." On one occasion, Ms. Fosse told the researcher that she had spoken to the class about Faye one time when Faye was out of the room.

> (Karen Fosse said,) "I assumed that the children knew about Faye when they all started, but they didn't. Nobody has ever explained about Faye. I described to the children that Faye had some problems with learning and speaking, but that I wanted them all to treat Faye as a part of the class, just as they do each other. And to help her."

These verbal instructions, however, are not entirely consistent with the reality of the situation. The very existence of a double standard of behavior, however well-intended, as well as Faye's not being a recognized member of any group in the class, are clear obstacles to her being regraded and treated as a bona fide part of the class or as a real peer. Furthermore, helping, in the sense that peer help is valued and encouraged, is impossible with Faye because the adults in the setting rush to provide her with the kinds of assistance that the children are expected to seek from and give to each other. With regard to Faye, the children are expected to "be kind to her."

According to Karen Fosse, Faye is in this first grade for "socialization" understood to mean "interacting" with the other children. In reference to Faye and the other children, Ms. Fosse expresses her wish to "see more interaction initiated on both sides." Yet, virtually no opportunities are provided for positive social interactions which include Faye.

Although as a routine, Faye participates in the general movement and activity of the class, her direct (and indirect) contacts with the adults in the setting frequently affirm that she is very different from the other children. This affirmation appears to be well understood by the children themselves, and may, indeed, account for the nature and quality of Faye's peer experiences.

Peer Interactions

In general, the children in this first grade class interact with each other frequently throughout the day in a wide variety of circumstances. The style and content of these interactions underscore their richness and diversity.

Children exchange greetings and pleasantries.

> Hans enters the room, walks to his desk, then to Ellen's in the row behind him. He leans on Ellen's desk, looking at her paper. She continues writing, looks up at him, and smiles.
>
> On line outside the gym, Justin, Ethan and Drew are talking together. Justin turns to Ethan and says, "You're a pretty smart kid."

> Kurt, who joins this class for lunch, enters the classroom. Adams calls to him immediately, "Sit next to me today." Kurt says, "Okay." Adam gets up and says, "I'll help you with the desk." Together, they move a desk next to Adam's desk.

They seek and provide information or assistance.

> (Karen Fosse asks Leigh to close the classroom door. After several unsuccessful attempts, Leigh approaches Woody, whose seat is closest to the door.) With her finger in her mouth, she says, "Woody, how do you close the door?" Her tone is high-pitched and soft. Woody gets up from his desk, walks to the door, steps on the flat lever just underneath the cylinder, and the door swings shut. Leigh watches, with her finger in her mouth. When the door closes, Woody turns, looks at Leigh, and goes back to his seat. Leigh watches until the door is fully closed. Then, she turns and walks back to her desk. She sits down and continues working.
>
> (Adam discovers that he has made an error when called to the chalkboard during a lesson.) He whispers to Ethan sitting behind him, "Why didn't you tell me?" Ethan whispers back, "I did."
>
> The assignment is to write each of several words listed on the board in a sentence. Judy helps the two boys on either side of her (Floyd and Garrett) sound out the letters of the words they want to write.

On occasion, the children approach each other to borrow something, or they share materials.

> Ted walks over to Ilene's desk. He asks her, "Can I have some Elmer's glue?" Ilene looks at him and nods. She reaches into her desk, pulls out her egg carton container and hands Ted her small bottle of Elmer's glue. Ted says, "Thanks". He walks back to his desk.
>
> Ethan says to Ellen, "Do you have a black crayon?" Ellen replies, "Yes. In my desk. Put it back." She returns to the group in the back of the room.
>
> Holly and Ellen are both washing their desks. Holly looks at Ellen, her eyes open wide. She says excitedly, "Do you want to trade sponges?" Ellen looks at the sponge in her hand, then she holds it out to Holly. Floyd watches them, twirling his pencil in his fingers.

Frequently, the children talk about their school work or an activity they are doing, or things in general.

> While Greta washes her desk, Chad, who sits next to her, says, "Greta, I'm getting really good at that last paper. Because c starts my first name and my last name. That was a c paper." Chad is smiling. Greta smiles at him as she continues to wash her desk.
>
> (Ethan returns to his desk after reading group. He has a new reading book.) Ellen says, "Adam's not in a book yet. They're not in a book yet." Adam, sitting at his desk, shakes his head. Ellen continues, "We're in Chug Chug." Ethan replies, "We're in Yes Yes." Ethan opens his book to the first page. He looks down a list of the books on the inside of the front cover. He finds "Yes Yes." Ethan says, "That's number 17. We only have three more." Then he looks up the list and locates "Chug Chug." He says, "Chug Chug is number 7." Ellen nods.
>
> Ellen, Ethan, and Holly are talking about the birds they see in their yards. Ellen says, "We feed them bird seeds." Ethan says, "That must be what they grow out of." He laughs heartily. Ellen and Holly laugh too.
>
> Ethan, Justin, and Bert are standing next to Drew. They are talking about eating clay. Ethan says, "I ate clay." Justin says, "Here, eat some now." Ethan replies, "No, I got sick." His voice elevates in pitch. They all laugh.

During playtime each day, the children engage in a variety of activities including painting and other crafts, doing puzzles, playing checkers and other games, and playing with toys they bring from home. Throughout this period, they interact with each other freely, discussing a broad range of topics, such as the rules, strategies, and roles of the games they are playing, what they are building or creating, what is going on at home, and so forth.

For the most part, peer interactions in this class are positive. On occasion, however, a few of the children participate in more negative encounters.

> Ellen begins to wash her desk. Floyd, sitting in the row behind her, says, "Can I borrow your yellow to do all this?" He points to his paper. Ellen replies, sharply, "No. I'm not sharing. And you can't have Holly's either. She only shares with me and Ilene."
>
> Hans stands in front of Holly's desk and says to her, "Holly, I'm all done." There is excitement in his voice. Ellen, who is just sitting down at her desk, directly in front of Holly's, says, sternly, making a face, "So what, Hans?" She sits down. Holly does not say anything.

Overall, the children in this class are involved on a consistent basis in social interaction with their classmates. However, even though Faye spends most of each school day with the class, she is not a part of the "social life" of the class, and her interactions with her classmates are significantly different from their interactions with each other.

The observations indicate that Faye typically spends a very small percentage of her time in direct contact with other children. With the exception of one child, Leigh, who was described by her teacher as "withdrawn", Faye's classmates spend very high percentages of time in contact with each other. Even Garrett, a child who is described by the teacher as "very quiet", experiences substantially higher levels of peer involvement than does Faye, thus suggesting that her experience is indeed atypical for this setting.

Although Faye is with this class for most of the day and moves freely around the classroom, she spends much of her time alone. She completes her few assignments, and then chooses successive activities from various places around the classroom, working on each for short periods of time. Faye leaves the class regularly in the morning and the afternoon for her scheduled speech and resource programs. Ms. Fosse reminds Faye each day when it is time for her to go. Faye appears content yet does not object to leaving the class. Her leaving, however, occasionally deprives her of positive group experiences.

> (After gym class, the children stand on line against the wall, awaiting Ms. Fosse.) Ms. Fosse stops at the head of the children's line. She looks down the line and says, "Faye, go to mrs. Hunt." Faye looks up. She does not move. Ms. Fosse starts to take a step toward Faye. She says again, a bit louder, "Faye, go to Mrs. Hunt." Ms. Fosse gestures, pointing to Faye and then in the direction of the teacher's room. The speech room is in the same area as the nurse and the teachers' room. At the same time, the girl who is standing behind Faye starts to take a step toward Faye. A moment later, Faye leaves the line and starts walking down the hallway toward the speech room. Ms. Fosse turns to the other children standing on line. In a pleasant voice, she says, "How nicely you're standing. I didn't even know you were here. I'll bet you can go all the way to our classroom like that. Let's see if you can. Okay, Leigh." Faye is absent for this compliment. The children are smiling while Ms. Fosse speaks to them.

Faye watches the other children now and then, and occasionally attempts to interact with them by teasing or playing tricks. She is not always successful.

> Floyd is in the hallway. Faye gets up and pushes his desk and chair far away from his row. She sits back in her seat and watches the door. Holly walks back from the wastebasket, and moves Floyd's desk and chair back. She and Faye do not look or speak to each other.

There seems to be considerable curiosity about Faye among the other children in her class. Although they do not ask questions directly, the children frequently stare at her, particularly at her face. Because no questions are asked openly, it is difficult to ascertain the precise nature of her classmates' curiosity. However, the staring phenomenon is a reasonable indication that curiosity does exist. In addition, Faye is, on occasion, the topic of secret conversation.

> Faye is sitting at her desk. Justin is near the window, putting something in a large plastic bag which is on the floor. Chad is standing near his desk, talking softly to Justin. Floyd is standing against the window shelf, near both Chad and Justin. As I move closer, I hear Chad say, "She's retarded." His tone is straightforward and descriptive, although he is whispering. Floyd stares at Faye. Chad looks at her over his shoulder and Justin

> glances over. I place my chair next to the movable shelf near the windows. I nonchalantly glance around the room. The boys stop talking and Floyd and Justin return to their seats.

Despite the curiosity and the occasional talking about her, Faye is usually uninvolved with her peers. She seldom initiates interactions of any kind with the majority of children, and she rarely communicates verbally with them, even when asked a question directly.

> (Faye has just finished saying that her brother played a game in her room. It is "sharing time". The children sit in a group.) Hans asks Faye, "What was he playing?" There is no answer. Afterwards, Ms. Fosse says, "I'm sorry Hans. You asked Faye a question and I didn't give her a chance to answer." Hans asks again, "What game was Jody playing?" Ms. Fosse repeats Hans' question to Faye. Faye says something. It is inaudible. Ms. Fosse does not elaborate.

Karen Fosse describes Faye as "doing a little better than before" but "still not communicating very well."

> Ms. Fosse says, "Well, she's very difficult to understand. She doesn't really initiate any conversation. She might be playing with someone and they're working together but they don't talk. She smiles all the time. Her talking is mostly one word or two words. Except when it's about her family. The other kids get tired of that."

When Faye does initiate verbalizations, they are usually directed to an adult, particularly Ms. Fosse, but frequently are unrelated to the topic under consideration.

> (Ms. Fosse instructs the children concerning the morning's assignments.) Ms. Fosse starts walking toward the counter on the door side of the room. Faye raises her hand. Ms. Fosse stops near the door, looks at Faye, and says, "Yes, Faye." In a very unclear voice, Faye says, "It Jody birthday." Ms. Fosse says, "It's Jody's birthday? Oh, he must be very happy. Is he 5 or 6?" Faye says, "Five." Ms. Fosse nods. Faye smiles. Greta turns around and stares at Faye.

Even with adults, however, Faye sometimes avoids verbal interactions.

> Ms. Fosse then walks to the front of the room where Faye is working on the floor. She is playing with a puzzle of a child's body. Ms. Fosse bends over and says to Faye, "What are you doing?" She smiles. There is no answer. Ms. Fosse repeats, "Faye, what is it going to be? A boy or a girl?" She pauses. Again, no audible answer. Ms. Fosse asks, "Where's the picture?" Faye takes a photograph of a boy out of the box and places it on the floor. Ms. Fosse walks to the round listening table.

Ms. Lynn Lacey, a soft-spoken, Caucasian woman of about 24 years, and the resource teacher in this school, describes Faye as being highly distressed about her verbal difficulties.

> "This year, she is more frustrated with school. She doesn't want to come. She won't get dressed in the morning. She's drawn back from her friends. She is aware, you know, that her speech isn't good. She's really struggling this year. Like when she came into my room, and I was asking her why she came at that time, she went out into the hall, to her locker, put on her coat and was ready to go home."

Faye, however, was not observed behaving in this manner during the research period.

The children in this class respond to Faye in a variety of ways, which for the most part are unlike the ways they interact with each other. With Faye, they do not exchange greetings or pleasantries, ask for or freely give assistance, share their materials, or discuss their school work and other matters--as they do with each other. Many children simply look at her and back away if she gets too close. This happens while the children are standing on line, during playtime, or during a class activity. Frequently, children seem unable or unwilling to communicate directly with Faye and require the teacher to do so for them.

> (One of the assignments involves coloring, cutting, and pasting, in that order. Faye takes the worksheet, a blank sheet of paper, and a pair of scissors.) Ted is standing near her at the counter. As she takes these items, he says, "Faye." His tone of voice is high; he looks sternly at Faye. Faye returns to her seat. Ted follows her. Faye sits down. (Karen Fosse is nearby talking with another child.) Ted stops next to Faye's desk in the middle aisle. He looks from Faye to Ms. Fosse a few times. He has a worried look on his face. Ms. Fosse turns around, walks toward the center aisle, and stops next to Faye. She says calmly to Faye, "First color all the pictures before you cut." Ms. Fosse takes the scissors to the holder on the counter. Ted returns to his seat.

Faye also experiences more directly negative encounters with her classmates. These include such things as unpleasant facial expressions toward her, hitting, mocking, overt rejection, and other negative acts.

> Holly goes to the counter, hands in one paper and takes another. She returns to her seat. She looks at Faye and makes a face (unpleasant) and sits down.
>
> (Karen Fosse selects Faye to lead the girls' line.) Faye walks to the front of the room, then along the boys' line to the door. She stops there next to Hans. Hans looks at her oddly and leans away from her.
>
> (Karen Fosse returns some papers to Faye, complimenting her work.) Faye shows Ellen, sitting next to her, the papers. Ellen makes faces at Faye. Faye turns back to her desk.
>
> Hans stands behind Faye on line. He knees her in the behind. She turns around and looks at him, but does nothing. Floyd slaps her on the upper arm. She slaps him back. They exchange slaps once or twice more.
>
> Ted and Holly are sitting on the floor near Ms. Gardner talking animatedly to each other as Ms. Gardner places materials from the cart onto the floor. Shortly, Faye returns. Ms. Gardner calls her immediately, before she sits at her desk. She goes to the small group in front. As soon as she nears, Holly scoots quickly closer to Ted and away from Faye, saying, "Yuck. I'm not going to sit there." Holly and Ted giggle together. Faye watches. Her expression is blank and she does not say anything.
>
> Ellen sitting next to Faye, picks her nose, then wipes her finger on Faye's desk. Ellen looks around quickly. She then moves her desk a bit away from Faye's.

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Ellen, primarily, and her friend, Holly, interact with Faye most consistently. Ellen occupies the desk adjacent to Faye's and Holly sits directly behind Ellen. The behavior of both girls toward Faye is characterized more by authoritativeness than by egalitarianism. Both attempt to direct her, control her, keep her in line.

> At about 12:00 p.m., Holly and Greta look at the clock, then over to Faye who is still eating her lunch. Holly says loudly and sternly, "Food, out." She points toward the door. Greta stands with her looking at Faye.
>
> Ellen is chosen with another girl to push the tray cart to the cafeteria. Just before she leaves, she says, "Don't let her touch my desk." She is talking to Holly in a firm, almost bitter tone. When Ellen returns from pushing the cart, the first thing she does is ask Holly, "Did Faye touch my desk?" Holly replies, "No", and shakes her head.
>
> On the way back to her desk, Faye walks past Floyd's desk and touches the elf he has made. Floyd is in the "Thunderbirds" reading group, now in session. Holly, who is sitting next to Floyd's desk, frowns at Faye, grabs Floyd's elf and says sternly, "Don't touch."

Faye is not always a passive bystander in these encounters. Her reputation for having "sticky fingers" and Ellen's belongings being frequently the target have not facilitated the development of a trusting, equal relationship. Frequently, however, Faye pursues Ellen, without much success.

> Faye sits down on the floor near Ellen. Ellen pushes herself backwards away from the group.
>
> Ellen is moving her desk away from Faye's toward Adam's. Faye follows Ellen's movements, by moving her own desk in the same way.
>
> Ellen gets up and moves Adam's desk closer to the window. Then she moves her own next to his. Both are moved away from Faye.. While Ellen is moving her own desk, the markers drop onto the floor. Ellen gets up and walks around to the other side of her desk. She picks up the markers. While she is there, Faye moves her own desk closer and next to Ellen's. Ellen sits down at her desk and continues working.

When the observer reported to the teacher that Ellen and Holly interact with Faye more than the other children do, and that their interactions consist mainly of sanctioning her or giving her instructions or directions, Ms. Fosse nodded her head and replied, "They think they are helping her. Now, Judy and Leigh play with her." However, on no occasion were either Judy or Leigh observed playing with Faye.

In fact, on only one occasion was Faye observed actually playing with any other child. Justin and Faye were "water painting" over each other's chalk drawings on a slate easel near the back of the classroom. This activity, however, was abruptly interrupted when Faye was told to leave the classroom for speech.

Karen Fosse reported only one other incident where a child, Bert, attempted to relate to Faye in a play activity. According to Ms. Fosse, Faye and Bert were sitting at the puzzle table in the back of the room. Bert tried to engage Faye in a conversation about what each of them was doing, but was unsuccessful. "She gave him no response at all. Not one word or anything. And Bert has always been very kind to her."

Discussion

There is no doubt that Karen Fosse is strongly concerned about Faye—about her interactions with the other children, her abilities to communicate with them, and the appropriateness of her even being with this class. This concern, however, seems to be expressed in two characteristic and somewhat conflicting ways. On the one hand, Karen Fosse and, indeed, Mary Engel, the lunch aide, are overprotective of Faye, hurrying to do for her what she can do for herself or could ask a peer to do, and to excuse, in subtle ways, important deviations from standard rules of behavior. On the other hand, Faye's success with her peers seems to be left entirely up to her. Karen Fosse herself wonders if Faye should be in this group if she is unable to communicate with her peers. Little specific intervention is offered to facilitate positive interactions with Faye. The only possible exception is the discussion about Faye in her absence which was reported by the teacher. It is difficult to determine the result of this discussion, since no change in the children's behavior was noted by the observer.

Several features of Faye's peer interactions are of note. The most striking feature is the limited extent to which she is involved with her peers in contrast with their own peer interrelationships. Of the five children selected at random to serve as a contrast group, only one child (Leigh) experienced peer encounters at a level similar to Faye's. This child, however, was described by Karen Fosse as "withdrawn," thus highlighting the atypical nature of Faye's experience.

Of the 17 other children in this first grade, two, Ellen and Holly, interacted with Faye most often. Their interactions with her, however, were not as peers, but as disciplinarians or persons in authority. The rest of the children, for the most part, seem to have chosen to ignore or tolerate her presence and behavior. It is difficult to pinpoint precisely why these forms of relating to Faye characterize the children in this class. It is not unreasonable, however, to postulate that both the direct and indirect behaviors of the adults toward Faye regulate, to a large extent, how the children relate to her, and how she behaves generally and toward her peers. No particular behaviors on the part of the other children toward Faye are either rewarded or sanctioned by the adults (or by Faye herself). All behaviors seem to be treated with equal acceptance. And, since Faye is not expected to meet the general behavioral standards of the class (including the ability to communicate effectively), the children have limited options: they can ignore or tolerate her, or they can assume the adult role of exercising control to keep her in line, or, as happened once or twice, they can try to engage her in play activity. Each choice has its own frustrations. None is truly successful.

CHAPTER 14

TOWARD A SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONIST THEORY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: CONCLUSION TO MAINSTREAMING CASE STUDIES

by

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For the most part, research in special education has been atheoretical, or perhaps more accurately, it has operated within the unconscious assumptions of the field's practitioners (Tomlinson, 1982; Rist, 1982). These assumptions are: (1) Disability is a condition that individuals have; (2) Disabled /Typical is a useful and objective distinction; (3) Special education is a rationally conceived and coordinated system of services that help children labeled disabled; (4) Progress in the field is made by improved diagnosis, intervention and technology.

While a number of people have critiqued particular assumptions (Conrad, 1976; Mercer, 1973; Braginsky & Braginsky, 1971; Szasz, 1970; Schrag and Divoky, 1975; Scott, 1969) and even the general approach, (Sarason & Doris, 1979) there have not been systematic attempts to develop an alternative paradigm for special education. In short, most research has been for special education (serving the field as it conceives of itself), not of special education, that is, looking at the field from an alternative vantage point (Freidson, 1970).

The case studies we have presented are peppered with comment and analysis. But, they are descriptive. The nature of our writing leads to boiling down and developing emphasis but we have left much for the reader to do in making sense out of the totality of words of our subjects, and the pages and pages of anecdotes. While some will find it useful to use the assumptions of special education to order our findings, we present a different way of thinking to integrate the disparate description, first person testimony, and reconstructions of events into a more comprehensive whole. The theory presented derives from the symbolic interactionist school of sociology (Blumer, 1969; Meltzer, Petras & Reynolds, 1975). The particular cast it takes is from the data we collected on this project. Grounded in data of twenty six case studies our goal is to begin to build an interactionist's theory of special education.

We start by reviewing some of the data we collected for the purposes of providing illustrations of the theory which follows.

In most people's minds "disability" and "mainstreaming" paint a clear picture. A child in a wheelchair, perhaps with cerebral palsy, or maybe mentally retarded, surrounded by non-disabled peers. This portrayal, as our case studies reveal, is deceptive. As we entered the schools to start our observations, a clear concept of "disability", "mainstreaming" and "special education" turned into a mirage. It blurred when we tried to use them to order the murky world we were in.

During one of our first visits to a school in conjunction with the project, I walked down the hall of a high school with its principal. A girl in a wheelchair passed us coming the opposite way. I used the word disabled when I said something about the student to my guide. He told me that the teenager in the wheelchair was not disabled. When I questioned him, he explained how officially students were only designated as disabled if they required special services and had been reviewed by the Committee on the Handicapped and had an IEP (Individual Education Plan). The young lady lived close to the school and did not need special transportation. She fully participated in the regular high school activities without special arrangements. In the eyes of the principal she was not mainstreamed, in fact, administratively she was not disabled.

In the same school, we met a young man named Louis. He was officially on the roster as being in a program for "learning disabled". The teacher in the program seldom saw him. He participated fully in all the regular high school academic offerings and was planning to go to college. He had academic problems in the past but not any more serious than those experienced by a host of other students who had not been labeled learning disabled. The teacher explained his presence on the roles by the story of how his influential parents thought he would benefit from the services provided in the learning disabled program. He is officially considered handicapped and as a mainstreamed student, but the head of the program uses the disability designation tongue in cheek when referring to him. And he is not the only one. While she uses disability to refer to all the students in her program, with one boy she says that he is "really impaired" as if the others in the class were not. This irreverence to handicap labels was common among the teachers and students we talked to across the many sites we visited.

Many of the students who are not designated disabled in this urban high school, who are considered regular students in a general program, if they lived in the suburban district where another program we studied is located, we'd be in the resource program for an "impairment" and would be officially designated as handicapped. In an elementary school we observed, it had a class for emotionally disturbed boys most of whom were black, and who had been referred from a more middle class school than where the special class mainstreaming placement had left them. Some people working in the program saw the severely emotionally disturbed label as inappropriate for these children and reflecting cultural biases rather than any pathology that the students had.

In a jr. high school we studied, there was a class designated as "trainable mentally retarded" that could neither read, write and those who could talk only knew a few words. Conferring with the principal about the class, he referred to the students as extremely low functioning and expressed his amazement that they were adjusting so well to school. The teacher in charge of the program had a different view of the students and mainstreaming. She referred to them as "cream puffs" that is, easy to work with. She compared these students to her earlier experiences working with "really" handicapped youngsters in a state institution for the severely and profoundly retarded. This teacher was at odds with the principal in that she saw her students as being needlessly isolated in a self-contained classroom when they should and could be more integrated with the other jr. high school students.

Another principal we talked to discussed an activity in which the school's music teacher visited a self contained class for the trainable mentally retarded to give music instructions as mainstreaming. The teacher laughs at the principal's use of the phrase.

These examples, and hundreds of others we have, illustrate how very different the meaning of "disability", "mainstreaming" and "special education" is in the schools we have studied. Perhaps the most striking illustration of the non-absolute nature of the concept of disability was seen in our observations of free school. This private, federally funded school, where typical children were side by side with children who would have and some who had been denied typical placement in typical schools and labeled autistic. At the free school, a setting which was very much charged with anti-exclusion and pro-mainstreaming ideology, these children were not even referred to as "disabled". In another setting they would be labeled severely handicapped, at free school they were taken for granted.

How children are perceived, including whether they are thought of as disabled, and how they are dealt with varies from school district to school district, from school to school, and place to place within a given school. In addition, who was considered handicapped and what specific type of handicapping conditions a student has, varies over time.

In order to look more carefully at how the meaning of disability changes, lets look more carefully at the class I observed of children labeled learning disabled/neurologically impaired. As my case study reveals, they were called learning disabled/neurologically impaired but this simple designation obscured the great variation of both their present socio-economic situations and their intellectual functioning. Prior to being in the class they had been labeled with a variety of clinical terms. Some of them had their label changed three times in the course of their academic career. One boy was first labeled emotionally disturbed then educably mentally retarded, then learning disabled. The placement in the program I observed had more to do with contingencies than with any particular hard and fast diagnosis. In fact, the label was conferred on all the students after the program was available for placement. Prior to the program, which was in its first year of operation, there were no programs designated for learning disabled/neurologically impaired in the high schools in the district. Once the program opened, it had to be filled, children had to be redefined and relabeled. The teacher's aide in the program, as you remember, was a black inner city man in his late twenties and a graduate of the city's public schools. When I asked him what he thought of the resource room program that he worked in and I was studying he replied:

> When I was in school, the kids like the ones who are here they felt humiliated. They would go into class and would be asked to read and the teacher would tell the, "Come on now" and they couldn't read. Some of them would stop coming and some would get after the teacher and yell back.

As part of the program, students visited factories to explore, as the staff put it, "the world of work". A teacher on one of the tours said to the students, after the tour guide had pointed to a section of the factory that was recently automated:

> You see now how so many jobs that used to take muscle now take skill. Lots of jobs awhile back, all it took was muscle.

One of the boys on the tour responded:

> That's all we've got.

These two stories point to important factors in understanding the meaning of disability for the high school students I studied. As the statement about humiliation suggests, this high school was a place for literates. It is "academic" and for the most part, those who cannot read and write are made to feel out of place there. Some of the most fascinating data that was collected was on how the students in the program hide their illiteracy from others and how they negotiate an identity that minimize the stigma of this deficiency. This class itself, and its designation as "learning disabled/neurologically impaired" and being seen as part of the special education program was used by some to minimize the stigma and work out a way of talking and thinking about themselves. For some the association with the class was the stigma not the reading deficiency.

Most of the students in the program were reading much poorer than the average student in the school. Before the program existed, students like those in this program experienced the shame of being illiterate. Without an LD program, there was not hope of a high school diploma. Many with skills levels equal to those in the program still do drop out but others don't. As the quotation from the tour suggests, the nature of the job market has changed so there aren't the kinds of jobs for unskilled workers that there used to be. Poor students, the illiterates, who dropped out of school and had opportunities in the past to find employment, now don't.

What all the students in the program I studied had in common was that they were all reading below the fourth grade level, some as low as second grade. (As an aside I want to point out how insulting the designation of reading at the second grade level is to a student. It is one thing to be compared to your peers and say that you are a poor reader among seventeen year olds but to say you are reading on a par with a second grader is of utmost insult. This way of referring to student's reading personifies how experts are unable to see what their designations mean to the people who they put them on.) In reviewing their school records, one can see that their poor reading is what precipitated their placement in special education classes:

> Jane was referred to evaluation due to continued difficulty with reading and spelling (evaluation report).

* * *

> Virgil was referred because of his inability to function in the English class (summary report)

One girl is another special education class in the school told an observer:

> I'm really low in reading. I'm probably fourth grade reading. Math isn't a hassle, right? But why should they put me in special education... Why should I be in special education for everything.

Problems in reading was clearly central in their special education placement, in fact, in a number of the records there are notes suggesting that placing the child in special education programs is an attempt to give children intense work in language arts so as to bring them up to proper grade level:

> Mona's good attention span and willingness to cooperate indicate that giving special attention, she may be able to overcome or compensate for her present language difficulties.

* * *

> ...any potential improvement cannot be anticipated unless he is exposed to intense, specific program for compensatory training for learning disabilities.

* * *

> Jimmy's teachers feel that he has made progress while in the micro program but that he still has a long way to go before he can function without the assistance of the special education class.

* * *

A number of students that we talked to thought that the special education was designed to be remedial - that it was to provide intense work so that they could catch up and be on grade level with their peers. The wording of the letters written home explaining the special education placement have this tone.

The way the special education placement is discussed suggests remediation in specific areas or what the programs are about. But all the students in the class I studied had been in special education from early in their school careers. While they started out in their special education careers as being thought of as being way behind in reading, somewhere along the way they stopped being referred to as being behind and needing to catch up, rather reference to them as learning to read had been dropped. To put it another way, for the most part, the students who are in the class I studied, although way below the norm in reading achievement, and originally placed in special education because of their reading, were no longer defined in terms of their reading. Learning disability and neurological impairment had become their master status (Goffman, 1963).

The clinical definition of learning disability/neurological impairment that is used in the district was extremely broad (Rist, 1982). Placement in the class was more a matter of convenience and contingencies than of accurate assessment, if we can talk about accurate assessment when the validity and reliability of such designations are in question. Thus, a rather concrete condition, poor reading, was replaced by an abstraction that provided no clarity as to the nature of the child's condition or any specific program to deal with the inability to read. The quest to make a child a reader was replaced in the program that I studied by the pursuit of a high school diploma, or as the students referred to it "walking across the stage".

The students took on the label of learning disabled and neurologically impaired and the teachers working with the program were willing to use the designation to negotiate a place for the students in the school, a place that would be denied to them if their problems simply were defined as illiterate. The students could do special assignments in regular class, have books read to them rather than read the required text. They went about collecting Carnegie units and in other ways doing a modified form of what was required to graduate. The most difficult task for those in the program was the minimum competency test required by the state in order to be eligible for a high school diploma. If a student can't pass the minimum competency test, they can't graduate. While I was conducting the study, the state was threatening to take away accreditation to schools who did not pass a certain percentage of those students who took the test. As a result of the various lobbying groups, children who are labeled learning disabled can take the reading test by having the reading comprehension paragraphs plus the multiple choice answers read to them. People who cannot read at all can pass the minimum competency reading test, if designated learning disabled. Thus, students in the program I studied who couldn't read could pass the reading test and thereby graduate because of the learning disability label.

Again, while it is not clear to the teachers in the program, or to those making the diagnosis what learning disability is, they can use the designation to negotiate a place for passage through this social institution, the high school, that would normally be hostile toward the illiterates.

Most of those in the program could easily be in another program, for some a few IQ points could put them in the mentally retarded slot; a designation that under state guidelines make them ineligible for a high school diploma. Or if they were behavior problems, the students would be in a standard resource program and defined as emotionally disturbed. All of the students in the class were defined as "nice kids" or as having a history of being supported by the teacher who was in charge of the program. With no special designation they would merely be illiterates, dropouts at sixteen or involved in some other activity in the school with no hope of getting a diploma.

The designation of special education/learning disabled and neurologically impaired is something many of the class members are ashamed of. Some of the students when they are in the class, sit against the wall that the door is on so that the people who are passing cannot see them. Others avoid being seen with some of the kids in the class so they don't get a bad reputation. For the most part, the students are willing to forego the stigma of being in the program for a chance to walk across the stage. One wind drinking inner city man put the dilemma he experiences in the program this way :

> Let me tell you that I am in this class but I am not like most of them... I'm slower than your average but in some ways I am a lot faster... See most of the kids that I hang out with in jr. high, they're in jail or kicked out of school... Learning disabled is what they labeled me but I am much more advanced... Being in this class will help me graduate... Only problem is that when they label you that, that's the way you are going to be known for the rest of your life... All I want to do is graduate, that's what I need. Now, if after being labeled and I don't graduate, then I really got it bad.

This quotation illustrates how students have their own ways of thinking about their placement and what it means in terms of their own lives. They are sensitive to the double binds of getting help under the designation of special education.

If "disability" is such a flexible concept, how is it that people come and think about disability in the way that they do? In our own research we have many examples of the process by which people learn to think about themselves and others in a particular way. In one school we studied, the principal was approached by the central administration of the school district with a proposal that he take a class of students labeled autistic. Prior to the request, he had no experience with children with that label. From his point of view, they didn't exist. During the course of our research, we watched the process by which he developed of thinking about the class he was asked to take. We saw him talking to others, forming a perspective on the situation, visiting the class and having his perspective modified. How he came to define that class of children and how he came to understand the meaning of autism affected whether he embraced the offer to take the class or whether he fought it. His perspective on the class was also influenced by the problems he was facing in his own school and what his vision was for the future. Eventually, after our observations were over, he did accept the students but his perspective was shaped by the nature of the interaction with the class. This influenced where he placed the class in the school, how he talked about the class, and how he defined his responsibility towards it.

Like most diagnostic categories associated with special education, autism is an ill defined questionable category that most experts will admit to not knowing much about. How the principal comes to understand "autism" is not so much about the truth of autism, in some ways there is no truth. Through interaction the principal went from not knowing what "autism" was, not even knowing it existed, to a point of developing a way of thinking about the class so as to include them under his administrative jurisdiction.

Another example of learning about disability can be found among our own researchers on this project. In some of the schools we visited, students who were labeled "disabled" and nothing apparent about them that would identify them as different from any one else in the school. Observers had to have the "disabled" students pointed out to them. Through interacting with the people working in the programs, they came to see how other people defined "disability" and then they began to see the children so designated from that frame of mind. The study itself led us to interacting and structuring what we saw around the concept of "disability". We would up using that way of thinking to relate to schools. For some, it became their way of thinking. What if we approached for example the schools with the concept of illiteracy rather than mainstreaming, we would have conceptualized the study in the school differently.

Symbolic Interaction

Symbolic Interactionist's theory stems from the writing of John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead (1934) and others, especially those associated with the Chicago School of Sociology (Blumer, 1969; Meltzer, Petras and Reynolds, 1975). (More recent supporters of the approach include Howard S. Becker (1970); Anslem Strauss and Barney Blaser (1967) and Herbert Blumer (1969)).

Compatible with the phenomenological perspective (Bruyn, 1966) and fundamental to the approach is the principal that human experiences are mediated by interpretation. Objects like wheelchairs, people like "resource teachers" and "special education students", situations such as "mainstreaming" and behavior such as reading and writing do not produce their own meaning, rather, meaning is bestowed upon them. While the educational specialist, for instance, might define a language master or a taperecorder as a device to teach "learning disabled" children to read, the teacher may define it as an object to entertain unruly students when she runs out of work for them. Or, place the speaking machine with a non-western tribal group and it might be defined as a religious icon to be worshiped (Bogdan, Biklen, 1982). The meaning people give to their experience and the process of interpretation is essential, not accidental or secondary to what experience is. A person's world is their imagination of it. Humans, in a phenomenological sense actively engage in the creation of their reality. To understand behavior, we must understand ways of thinking and the process by which these ways of thinking are constructed. People act, not on the basis of predetermined responses to predefined objects but rather as interpreting, defining, symbolic animals whose behavior can only be understood by entering into the defining process with them.

Interpretation is not an autonomous act, nor is it determined by any particular force, human or otherwise (Rose, 1962). Individuals interpret with the help of others - people from their past, writers, family, teachers, television personalities and the people they meet in settings in which they work and play - but others do not do it for them. Through interaction, the individual builds meaning. People in a given situation, special education for example, often develop common definitions since they regularly interact and share experience, problems and background, but a uniform consensus is not inevitable. For example, some students in a special program might see the class primarily as an opportunity to catch up to their typical peers, others will see it as a punishment, a sentence, to be behind forever. Still others may think of it primarily as a social event, when they are lucky to be a part of (of course these are not mutually exclusive). A teacher in the program may say the students are suffering from a condition which has scientific legitimacy. Others may see the students as being pampered. And still others may see them as victims of racism.

Often shared definitions do develop and become reified. Consensus gets mistaken for "truth". People come to believe that children actually read at levels, have IQ's and are "mentally retarded" (Goudl, 1982). When symbolic interactionists approach such concepts, they bracket/them (examine their common sense use, take them from the realm of being give-ins) so they will not be mistaken for being "objective", "correct" or real in any larger sense of these terms.

Interpretation then, is essential in a symbolic interactionist approach, meaning of interaction paramount. Such things as internal drives, personality traits, reading levels, and intelligence quotients, take a backseat. Symbolic interactionists do not deny that these theoretical constructs might be useful to professional caregivers, however, they are relevant to understanding behavior only to the degree to which they enter into in effect the defining process. These approaches are studied to understand the way professionals construct their world.

A proponent of the theory would not deny that some people may be more predisposed to read, for example, but they would deny that reading could be understood of this predisposition, or that professionals assumptions about predisposition should go unexamined. Reading can only be understood by looking at the interplay between how various people come to define reading (the meaning it has) in specific situations. Reading comes to be defined differently, the process experienced differently and people exhibit different behaviors while reading in different situations. Teachers in the school come to define reading very differently from students in the same location or from their parents. Teachers definitions differ from each other. How reading specialists for example see reading as different from how special education teachers see it and they both differ from how regular teachers see it. Reading has meaning which concepts like grade level and aptitutde tests cannot deal with.

How is "self concept" handled by the symbolic interactionist? The self is not seen as lying inside the individual like the ego, or the personality, or as an organized body of needs, motives, internalized norms or values. The self is the definition people create through interacting with others. In constructing or defining the self, people attempt to see themselves as others would see them by interpreting gestures and actions directed toward them and by placing themselves in the role of the other. The self is thus a social construct - the results of persons perceiving of themselves and developing in definition through interaction. As they interact, they have the potential or reconceptualizing themselves, changing, or being influenced by others ways of responding to them. This way of conceptualizing the self has led to studies of the self fulfilling prophecy (Rist, 1973) and provides a background for what has become to be known as the labeling approach (Becker, 1963; and Erickson, 1962) to deviant behavior.

With this general introduction to symbolic interaction behind us, we turn to a list of assumptions which represent the application of symbolic interaction to special education and the situations we observed over the two years.

A Symbolic Interactionist Approach to Special Education

1. There are no "disabled" students in any absolute sense. "Mental Retardation" "Emotional Disturbance" "Learning Disability" and even "Blindness" and other specific disability categories are ways of thinking about others, attitudes we take toward them, ways of structuring relationships, accepted processes and frames of mind. Whether we think of people in terms of disability (or any other of the sub-categories) and what criteria we use to determine whether someone is or is not, has to do with how the definers think about these things.

Following up on this point, there are no true counts of the number of people, say with mental retardation or who are blind or any other alleged disability or are there any "correct" definitions of these things in any absolute sense (Bogdan and Ksander, 1980). Disability counts and definitions are reifications of customs and practice. The psychological testing movement has made judgments appear to be truths. Constructions of disability and counts of the number of disabled people are always temporal and represent larger political and social forces.

2. The physical and behavioral characteristics of children designated as disabled enter into the process through which the meaning of the child emerges but not in a deterministic way that it is commonly believed to. In an inspirational poster I saw in a local stationary store, there was a picture of two soaring segulls with a caption on the bottom saying "Birds Can Fly Because They Believe They Can". In one sense, this statement is simply ridiculous. Birds can fly because they have light bones, etc. etc.. No amount of believing can make a cow fly. Critics of the approach I am presenting here often misunderstand it, to mean that there is no physical reality in the condition of the people labeled disabled. Symbolic interactionists are not radical idealists (Blumer, 1980). An unalterable fact in the child's life may mean that he or she cannot hear or the fact that his or her legs are missing, or that there is organic brain damage. Symbolic interactionists do not deny this physical reality.

Such things as not being able to read or not being able to pass tests or not being able to walk or having organic brain damage, set parameters in which definitions develop but they do not determine how people with these conditions will be defined. To say that disability is a social construction is not to deny physiological, behavioral and psychological differences among people, it is to point out the importance of the meaning (if they are perceived and how they are perceived) of these differences and structuring our actions toward those with specific designations. For a point of clarification, those women back in the 1600's in Salem, Massachusetts did behave in ways which brought them to public attention but that did not make them witches. That way of thinking was conferred upon them. Similarly, children who score below certain levels on standardized tests, may be deemed "retarded" but this is conferred upon them; not inevitably flowing from the child's behavior or an objective statement of the child's condition.

Some people cannot see. "Blindness" tells us about what not being able to see means (Scott, 1969). How "blindness" is manifested in the treatment of and reactions to people is what symbolic interaction dwells on. While not denying the autotomical and behavioral realities, symbolic interaction emphasizes that human beings have the capacity to change their world to be what they imagine it to be. Returning to the bird poster/human beings, by believing that they could fly, did fly. They did not fly the way the poster suggests, unaided, by flapping their arms. But human's belief is so powerful that they can change definitions and change circumstances. Human beings redefine the world in flying so as to be able to soar like the seagull. Similarly, although tempered by physical reality, the power of definitions in the field of disability is crucial in understanding the circumstances of those who fall under the rubrick of special education and their future.

3. Disability is interactional. Be it "mental retardation" "cerebral Palsy" "deafness" "blindness" "emotional disturbance" or "learning disability", disability is only in a particular and most narrowest sense a condition that a person has. The word "disability" and the many sub-categories under the heading does not simply symbolize a condition that is already there in advance; it makes possible the existence or the appearance of the condition for it is part of the mechanism whereby the condition is created. (Rose, 1962, pg. 5). Disability is a designation and therefore embedded in social relations. As a concept, disability is a particular way of thinking and a way of acting and reacting. The creation of the disability concept and their application in specific settings, the effect it provokes, it is derived and sustained in interaction. We learn about disabilities, and what they mean from others.

Because of the interactional nature of disability, the study of "mental retardation" and all the other categories of disability should not be exclusively the disabled person but the interactionist way of thinking of people who confer this meaning upon others and this particular way of ordering the world.

4. When we apply the concept of disability, or any specific designation falling under that generic term, we cast a situation in a particular way. "Disability" can change the meaning of behavior. The word disability or more specifically its many subcategories such as mental retardation, emotional disturbance and deafness makes us selectively sensitive to certain behaviors and actions. Things that might not have been noticed before,

jump out and take on meaning within the framework of such ideas. Behavior and physical characteristics that were made note of and interpreted in one way (that is that a person is bad for example) get interpreted in another way (this person is sick) through the ideas of special education.

Disability categories give those who use them a sense of knowing and therefore a way of relating to those who fall under their headings. Labeling a child suggests that he or she is understood as being like those in the category and belonging to a special group of professional people. A whole set of assumptions and expectations are applied. Thus the child is subject to a set of behaviors and a way of thinking that alter his or her circumstance.

5. How an individual defines him or herself in regard to an alleged disability is a function of and is constructed through interaction. People come to see themselves as blind, mentally retarded or by other epithets or rejects such concepts, or ashamed or proud of the condition through social interaction. How they think of themselves is mediated by significant others - parents, teachers, attendants - who enter into their lives. People interpret other's gestures and actions in attempting to see themselves as others see them and thereby construct a self-concept. People with particular disabilities do not have peculiar innate personalities or ways of thinking about themselves. For some, "disability" dominates how they see themselves. For others, is an insignificant way of how they think.

How a person comes to think about his or her alleged physical behavior or psychological difference in a particular way has to be understood in terms of the life history of the individual and how it intersects the institutions he or she is a part of and the particular historical period in which he or she lives (Bogdan, 1974). People ought to be thought of as having a disability career, that is a series of stages and positions in which a perspective on disability and the relation to self is developed. Those who are judged disabled have a point of view about who they are, what they have been called and who has been doing the accusing (Bogdan and Taylor, 1976; Bogdan, et. al. 1974). It is these thoughts that shaped how they react to programs that they are in, not the wishes and models of program planners.

6. Disability, as special education specialists construct it, is a particular frame of mind by which to organize the world. The salience of their way of seeing human differences in influencing how others see it, needs to be studied as an issue of the politics of competing perspectives. For example, whether a child is conceptualized as learning disabled or is illiterate is an important issue and one that can only be understood in a political frame of mind. The study of development, the growth and the politics of special education and how they came to construct disability as they have, who they fought with in the process and what their common sense unnoticed assumptions are, is an important part of the study of special education (Conrad and Schneider, 1980). There are histories of special education

written by people who are special educators but these should be the data of a symbolic interactionist history of special education not the conclusion. Films brief histories in introductory tests emphasize the onward and upward nature and gloss over serious conceptual issues. A Catholic and Agnostic anthropologist can attend the same mass but experience it quite differently. In order to understand analytically the social history and the social dimensions of special education as a profession, it might have to be approached by nonbelievers.

7. Disability is situational. Alleged physical behavior and psychological difference have particular meanings in particular settings (Bogdan, 1976). Not knowing how to read has different meaning from one school to another. Its meaning in one class may differ from the meaning in another. The concept of the six hour retarded student points how, in the context of the school, a student may be defined as retarded but not be thought of in that way in his family or neighborhood. Questions about the efficacy of various special education programs have to be approached in terms of the meaning of special education and various disability categories in the wide range of contexts.

The meaning of special education varies depending on where you sit in the school bureaucracy or in which system it is a part. Often rules are made at one level to be applied in another. The meaning of the rules of disability of education mediates how people behave not the legislation. Often the images that people who formulate the rules have of not how special education works and who is disabled is quite different from people who deliver services in the real life settings.

8. All special education programs exist in a larger context -- they are part of schools, school systems, states and nations. Definitions, ways of thinking, do not get formed in a vacuum nor are they formed at random. Definitions reflect the environments in which they are a part. They will reflect the values, the problems and the concerns of people who operate in those settings. They will also reflect economic conditions. Meaning does not occur in isolated bits. It is part of larger and complex clusters. To isolate special education and the disabled from the context of the systems of which they are a part is to distort this phenomenon and leaving significant aspect of what creates it, unexamined. The meaning of the humpbacked is woven into our understanding of beauty, normality, sickness, evil, productivity and the good life. In order to understand the meaning of "being behind in school" we have to go beyond the isolated pieces.

9. Disability has moral meaning. The way we think about people with alleged disabilities in special education in general is filled with moral meaning (Bogdan and Biklen, 1977). One of the images that we have of the disabled is that they are dangerous. How is that image remanifested in the media and in the lives of disabled and nondisabled people in our society? Susan Sontage, in her discussion of cancer, tuberculosis and leprosy as metaphors points out how the meaning of these diseases

goes far beyond physiology. So does the meaning of disability in special education go far beyond alleged physical behavior and psychological differences. Disability has symbolic meaning that must be looked at in terms of what society honors - intelligence, confidence, appearance and winning. Our society is structured to bring shame to people with alleged disabilities. Some problems are technical problems - providing physical access to wheelchairs, building communication systems for non-verbal people - other problems are moral and social. They are located much deeper in the seams of our society.

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